

SATURDAY

100 years of a visual question

First of a four-day series - today, the new secrets of space. Tomorrow: Free poster



THE INDEPENDENT

No 2,924

2 MARCH 1996

50p

Mortgage cuts will bring rise in prices

Hope of rate cut is clear sign of recovery

DIANE COYLE

and PAUL WALLACE

The prospect of lower interest rates following the recent sharp rise in house prices is the clearest sign yet that a recovery in the housing market is under way for the first time in five years.

After months of gloom, Britain's 16 million home owners face the virtual certainty of lower borrowing costs and rising house prices.

The chances that the Chancellor, Kenneth Clarke, will cut base rates after his meeting with the Governor of the Bank of England, Eddie George, on Thursday were raised yesterday by news that manufacturing is in recession and inflationary pressures are vanishing.

At the same time a sharp rise in house prices last month gave the clearest sign so far of improved prospects.

Mr Clarke's scope for reducing borrowing costs was also helped by further signs of economic weakness in the US, increasing the likelihood that interest rates will fall across the Atlantic and elsewhere later this month.

London's financial markets regard a quarter-point reduction in the level of base rates to 6 per cent after the forthcoming monetary meeting as a racing certainty. The Bank is thought to be unlikely to object to a third reduction in four months even though Mr George advised against January's move.

Lower mortgage rates would almost certainly follow, helping to boost the housing market further.

The Treasury said the Chancellor would make his decision on all the evidence. "It doesn't do to focus on one sector of the economy at the expense of others," a spokesman said.

Nevertheless, interest rate hopes took share prices higher yesterday, with the FT-SE 100 index ending just over 25 points higher at 3752.7.

House prices jumped 1.4 per cent in February according to the Nationwide building society's index. This took them to a level 0.9 per cent higher than a year earlier, the first time since

last April that prices have risen year-on-year.

The Halifax's index, due on Monday, is also expected to show an increase in prices in February.

"We cannot expect this kind of increase every month, but the housing market is definitely recovering," said Ian Shepherdson, a housing expert at HSBC Markets.

The Nationwide said the trend pointed to a "modest" recovery. A spokesman, Philip Williamson, said: "We are confident that recent signs of improvement will mark the beginning of a moderate but sustained recovery in the market."

A base rate cut would lead to further reductions in the cost of home loans, already at their lowest level for more than 30 years.

The Nationwide raised the stakes in the mortgage war by cutting its standard variable mortgage rate to 6.99 per cent just over a week ago. Its competitors are under pressure to follow its example.

Separately, the influential monthly purchasing managers' survey of manufacturing showed industry moving into recession last month. It also reported a sharp fall in the prices index, to its lowest for more than three years. "The contents of the survey are extremely positive," said Simon Briscoe, a City economist at Nikko Europe.

The purchasing managers' index of manufacturing activity fell below 50 - the dividing line between expansion and contraction - for the first time since November 1992.

In its biggest plunge for four years, the survey's prices index fell from 49.1 to 44.4, the lowest since January 1992. This raised hopes that manufacturers may soon be paying less for their inputs of materials.

The consumer goods industries, which make up almost one-third of manufacturing, were more buoyant than a depressed investment and intermediate goods sector. "The figures for the consumer sector were relatively good," said Peter Thomson, director-general of the Chartered Institute of Purchasing and Supply. "The question is whether the rest of the manufacturing sector will follow."

The decline last month was centred in the investment and intermediate goods industries. Deteriorating order books in these sectors swamped a further small pick up in consumer goods sector.

A further sign of weakness was that the employment index was below the 50 watershed, pointing to job cuts, for the second month running.

Fury at 'disgraceful and insulting' offer to family of woman killed searching for fire victims



Fleur Lombard, whose life has been judged worth £950, and (left) Kevin Lane, whose partner will receive no pension

Civil servants 'to be punished over Scott'

CHRIS BLACKHURST

Westminster Correspondent

Ministers yesterday refused to rule-out disciplinary action against civil servants criticised in the Scott report on arms to Iraq and provoked a bitter Commons row.

They ignored repeated calls from the Opposition to make a statement on yesterday's disclosure that civil servants are under threat of disciplinary action and indeed dismissed and was "in the best position" to make a statement.

Mr Foster said Mr Taylor was from "one of the departments where civil servants are under threat of disciplinary action and indeed dismissed" and was "in the best position" to make a statement.

He added: "With no minister taking responsibility, it would be shameful for the Government to try to off-load all responsibility for the Scott report on to civil servants." Mr Taylor said he would report Mr Foster's concerns to Ian Lang, President of the Board of Trade.

Mr Foster later sent a letter to Roger Freeman, the public

TURN TO PAGE 2

Adams is granted visa for visit to US

COLIN BROWN

and DONALD MACINTYRE

Gerry Adams, the Sinn Fein president, is to be given a visa for the United States so that he can attend the St Patrick's Day celebrations.

In a move, which will anger sections of the Tory party, President Bill Clinton decided to grant a visa to Mr Adams but to attach conditions which restrict him to a single entry and prevent him raising funds for Sinn Fein.

The decision was confirmed last night by US officials and the White House was due to make a formal announcement later. The officials said the conditions had been imposed as a gesture of condemnation of the IRA's decision to end its 17-month ceasefire. Downing Street would only say last night that the granting of a visa to Mr Adams was "a matter for the US government," which is consistent with the stance taken by the British government over the last two weeks.

This is in sharp contrast to the first granting of a US visa to the Sinn Fein president last year which the British government strongly condemned.

But British officials have been keen to point out that neither British nor Irish Ministers are at present meeting Sinn Fein and only officials may do so.

That carries the clear implication that a meeting between Mr Adams and either the president or the vice-president, Al Gore, would be unacceptable in London.

The relatively "hands off" approach adopted by Whitehall could reflect a recognition in government circles to the prospect that Mr Adams would anyway be granted a visa. But it may also stem from the hope that the US will apply pressure on Mr Adams to secure a restoration of the ceasefire. In that sense, Whitehall may believe that there may even be a benefit in the Sinn Fein president visiting the US.

Nevertheless, the granting of a visa, at a time when Mr Adams has conspicuously failed

to condemn the resumption of the IRA ceasefire, will anger not only the Ulster Unionists but also some prominent Tory backbenchers with an interest in Northern Ireland issues.

David Wilshire, the Tory MP for Speke, who this week attacked the peace bid by John Major and John Bruton as "surrender", said last night: "Adams will be going to New York with blood on his hands."

"There have been three deaths in London. He has not condemned the bombings. It raises questions about Clinton's judgement," Mr Wilshire said.

A ministerial source said: "The backbench will be extremely angry about this. The Government is not very happy with it. He may be banned from fund-raising in the States, but that's too late. The money has already fled from the States to Ireland."

The Government was consulted about the visa and is understood to have suggested that there should be conditions placed on it.

Buy The
Independent
today and
get the
Independent
on Sunday
for only
50p

See voucher on page 2

Play
Formula 1
Dream Team

Starting
tomorrow in the
Independent
on Sunday

MAGAZINE
Write a children's
story and win
£2,000

28-page fashion
supplement

Dinner-party
nightmares

WIN DAVID
MILES
RENAULT
SPIDER
See page 22
for token

IN BRIEF

Tougher penalties
The Lord Chief Justice signalled a tough new attitude to death crash drivers with dramatic increases in the sentences of two convicted men. Page 6

Italian shoot-out
The hunt for an Italian serial killer ended in an orgy of violence, as the culprit killed two more people, held up in a farmhouse with two hostages and, after a shoot-out, then killed himself. Page 9

Cloudy weather
Cloudy with some rain and a northerly wind. Page 2

9 77051 94629

section
ONE

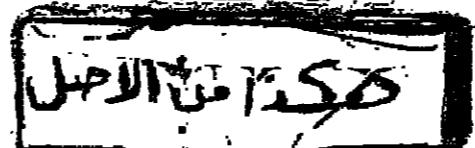
BUSINESS 17-21 COMMENT 14.15 CROSSWORD 2.28 GAZETTE 16 LEADING ARTICLE 14
LETTERS 14 NEWS 2-12 OBITUARIES 16 SHARES 18 SPORT 22-28 UNIT TRUSTS 17 WEATHER 2

Independent
WEEKEND

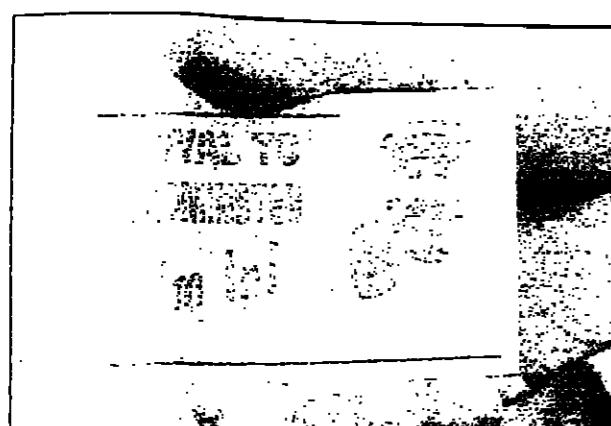
ARTS 6.7 BOOKS 8-11 CHESS 27 LISTING 22 MONEY 22-23 MOTORING 21
PROPERTY 21 REVIEWS 6 SHOPPING 4-5 TRAVEL 14-15 TV & RADIO 17-18

IAN CHOSE THE LIGHTS OUT OPTION ON VIRGIN UPPER CLASS BUT, UNFORTUNATELY, HAD DRUNK TOO MANY COFFEES.

Upper Class We offer a sleep-suit, duvet, pillow, lights out in the cabin, and decaffeinated coffee. Call 01293 747 500 or see your travel agent. virgin atlantic



Leominster's traders play the loyalty card in attempt to trump out-of-town supermarket



RICHARD SMITH

More than 60 shopkeepers in an ancient Hereford and Worcester market town are fighting back against the large out-of-town supermarket they claim has badly hit their takings.

Traders in the town, which has a population of 10,000, have banded together to launch their own loyalty card scheme offering gifts and discounts of up to 25 per cent for shoppers using the town centre.

The "Loyal To Leominster" campaign has been organised by Graham Hurley, a butcher, to lure back shoppers from Safeway's out-of-town store, which opened nearly four years ago.

A recent survey by the local Chamber of Commerce revealed that 35 shops in the town centre were empty and six more had been converted into houses. Two town-centre supermarkets have closed, while three garages, a petrol station and a pub are also empty.

"Safeway's really known the town centre for six and we have been wallowing in self-pity ever since," said Mr Hurley, 45, who owns a specialist pork butcher's shop. "A lot of small retailers closed down... It's too easy to park up at Safeway, do all your shopping and forget about the town centre."

"My turnover went down by 33 per cent overnight and although there has been a grad-

ual recovery it's nowhere near back to the previous levels."

He added: "This will show people that shopkeepers in Leominster are not just a bunch of groaners. Although the supermarkets are clever at their job they cannot compete with the discounts we are offering."

The shops have spent £800 printing 10,000 membership cards. Every home in the town has been sent a leaflet with a picture of Lord Kitchener pointing a finger and asking: "Are you loyal to Leominster?"

Joining the scheme will be free and shoppers will be entitled to a wide range of cash discounts from local shops, building societies and insurance brokers. For instance, Ann's Pat-a-Cake bakery is offering 10 per cent off all purchases over £1 and there are similar discounts on children's summer clothes at Goody Two Shoes, the Olive Branch restaurant, meals at the Talbot Hotel and shoes costing more than £20 at Freeman, Hardy and Willis.

Monica Todd, president of the Chamber of Commerce and an insurance broker, said:

"It's a brilliant idea - we have got to take on the supermarket giants if we are going to survive."

Leominster's narrow streets follow a medieval grid pattern and even though there are three town-centre car parks shopkeepers always face a short walk with their provisions.

Somerfield and Quicksave have supermarkets on the fringe

How the shops are trying to compete with the supermarket



town has changed - apart from Market Day, there isn't a buzz about the place any more because people are not coming here. This should certainly help to revitalise Leominster. The alternative is... to just give in."

Leominster's narrow streets follow a medieval grid pattern and even though there are three town-centre car parks shopkeepers always face a short walk with their provisions.

Susan Fenton, 63, a retired farmer, said: "I'm disabled and it is easier to park and shop at Safeway - it would take at least an extra half-hour and a lot of carrying in the town centre. But I think the whole town dies a

death when the centre goes - it's one of those rolling balls - the less shops that are open the fewer people will come into town. It isn't much fun wandering round a town where half the shops are empty."

A Safeway spokesman said: "The important thing about our store is that ultimately it recaptures trade that was being lost to Hereford... It's very welcome to hear that people in Leominster are responding to customers."

How shopping habits have changed

	1990	1993 (est)	1990	1993 (est)
Single outlets	63.6	71.5	18.4	18.1
Small multiples	16.3	16.0	7.6	6.2
Large multiples	13.5	14.5	74.0	80.7

Numbers of specialist retailing outlets in UK

	1990	1993	Change (per cent)
Butchers	37,044	15,150	-57%
Greengrocers	14,333	12,400	-13%
Bakers	6,866	5,500	-19%
Fishmongers	2,974	2,050	-31%

Source: Retailing Industry Monitor

Seventeen people were arrested yesterday as bailiffs continued to clear the largest protest camp blocking the route of the Newbury bypass.

Police said the arrests were for obstruction and aggravated trespass. Protesters, some in tree-houses, offered resistance. Thames Valley police said: "The protesters have been putting up quite a struggle."

Police moved into the "Picnic Village" site in Snelsmore Common, Berkshire, the biggest of more than 20 camps on the route, early on Thursday. There were 13 arrests on Thursday and several people were trampled underfoot in clashes on the ground between demonstrators and police horses...

The police presence was maintained overnight to prevent other protesters from joining those still in the trees and yesterday an excavator cleared a path to the treehouses. Bailiffs then went up in cranes known as cherry pickers to bring down the tree dwellers. One bailiff was repeatedly showered with urine during efforts to clear lower branches from a tree. Police said: "A woman in the tree had a bucket of urine and kept pouring it at the bailiff as he tried to climb the tree. But he carried on regardless."

Pete Foulding, a tunnel expert, had confirmed that a maze of tunnels beneath the camp was clear, police said.

Police prison vans filled up as tension remained high during the day. At least one protester appeared to have been arrested for assault. Fellow demonstrators accused police of assaulting the protester.

Eight of the 13 arrested on Thursday have been charged with obstruction and aggravated trespass and given bail. One was released, two released after caution, one bailed to return to a police station and one remained in custody.

Fresh slicks raise fears of deliberate oil dumping

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR

At least two other oil slicks have been appeared in the sea near the site of the *Sea Empress* spill, raising fears that other ships may be using the disaster to dump oil deliberately.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds yesterday said that oiled birds were being picked up in Rhyl, north Wales, too far away to have been affected by the *Sea Empress*. There has also been a spill on the North Devon coast which appears not to have come from the *Empress*.

Members of the RSPB mon-

itoring scheme had also seen a slick in the sea near the site of the *Sea Empress* spill, raising fears that other ships may be using the disaster to dump oil deliberately.

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds yesterday said that oiled birds were being picked up in Rhyl, north Wales, too far away to have been affected by the *Sea Empress*.

Chris Hubbard, spokesman for the RSPB, said yesterday: "We have picked up several common scoters near Rhyl and on the North Devon coast birds have been in oil which appears different from that of the *Empress*." He said that ships coming to Britain were supposed to clear their oily bilges in port but that was cheaper and quicker for them to do so at sea.

"This happens more often in the winter when the nights are longer because the ships do it under cover of darkness."

The Marine Control Pollution Unit confirmed the existence of at least two other slicks, but was unable to confirm their origin. A spokesman said: "We have no evidence that masters are discharging oil illegally on purpose."

Meanwhile, Tony Blair, the Labour leader, on a St David's Day visit to Wales to talk about plans for a Welsh Assembly, joined the Pembroke MP Nick Ainger to meet teams involved in the clean-up operation.

Animal welfare groups involved in rescue operations will be able to claim compensation from the ship's insurers, the Government said last night.

hospital in Milford Haven, he was shown oiled seabirds being fed and washed. So far more than 2,600 have been recovered but 1,500 have died.

Mr Blair said: "It is absolutely essential that we take steps to ensure that this never happens again".

He said that recommendations made by Lord Donaldson in the wake of the *Braer* spill had not been implemented by the government.

Animal welfare groups involved in rescue operations will be able to claim compensation from the ship's insurers, the Government said last night.

Anti-Nazis picket jazz gig by Mussolini's son

PAUL FIELD

A jazz concert by Mussolini's son Romano, organised by Fascist sympathisers, was expected to be picketed last night by Anti-Nazi League protesters.

The black-tie event at the Marriott Hotel, in Grosvenor Square, central London, was sponsored by an accommodation agency whose owners have links with the far right in Italy and the United Kingdom.

Massimo Morsello and Roberto Fiore, who run the Kensington-based agency Meeting Point, agreed to organise the concert because of their adoration for Il Duce. The concert, given by Romano Mussolini, a pianist and his quartet, was expected to attract an audience of neo-Fascists, despite his own non-political reputation.

Mr Morsello, who keeps a

bust of Mussolini on his desk but has never heard Romano play, claimed he was approached by the pianist's representatives because of his business expertise. He stressed that he expected Italian jazz enthusiasts to attend but admitted: "Our main interest is that we are obviously Fascist, we are open about that and we have a weakness for his father."

Both Mr Morsello and Mr Fiore were active in Italian far-right politics in the early 1980s. The latter was a member of Terza Posizione, the political wing of the Armed Revolutionary Nuclei, which claimed responsibility for the 1985 bombing of Reggio railway station which left 85 people dead and 200 injured.

Mr Fiore and Mr Morsello were sentenced in *absentia* to nine and ten years in jail for subversive associations and being

members of an armed gang, although both men, who are 37, still proclaim their innocence.

Romano Mussolini, 69, performed in public for the first time in 1956, has appeared in most European countries and played with Chet Baker. He made his London debut at the Soho Jazz Festival in 1991.

His daughter Alessandra, 33, is an Italian MP for the neo-Fascist Alleanza Nazionale. His daughter by his second marriage, Rachelle, 21, a sociology student, is competing in the 1996 Miss Italy contest.

Last Thursday Glyn Ford, MEP for Greater Manchester East, wrote to the hotel, urging the general manager, Franz Ferschke, to cancel the booking.

However, a hotel spokeswoman, Elaine Ellis, said it was not the hotel's normal policy to accept or reject bookings on any basis other than availability.

Squatter estate agency opens

Britain's newest estate agent opened yesterday with some unique property descriptions.

The Squatting Estate Agents was opened in a corner shop in Brighton by the campaign group Justice! Photographs of properties were displayed with comments such as "Easy to get in. Good condition. Been empty for a long time" and "Clean, nice but small. Alarmed with Chubb and Yale locks".

Justice! claims Brighton has

the highest percentage of homelessness in the country. "While bits of paper are shuffled about and so-called urgent meetings waste hours, nothing ever seems to be done, so one practical solution is to squat," reads a publicity leaflet at the estate agent.

But not all has gone smoothly for the agency: the council served it with an affidavit to face court eviction proceedings on Monday. At the "grand opening" of the shop, one of the

group, Paul, said: "I wish the council would house people quicker than they evict people."

Clive Buxton, a hotelier, deplored the publicity being given to the resort. "We are a conference and tourist town and... this is not doing it much good," he said.

But Paul denied people were being encouraged to break the law. "You either starve and die on the street or you find somewhere to live," he said.



IT TAKES A SHARP SAW to make a smooth whiskey.

You see, unlike bourbons, Jack Daniel's Tennessee Whiskey goes through a step called charcoal mellowing. We steep our whiskey—drop by drop—through room-high mellowing vats of finely-tamped charcoal. To fill just one of these vats with charcoal, our sawyer will cut enough hard maple wood to stack 32 ricks, seven feet high. Then, he'll do it all over again. No doubt, charcoal mellowing is hard on our saw and our sawyer. But it sure makes things easy on our drinkers.

JACK DANIEL'S TENNESSEE WHISKEY



كذلك من الأصل

news

Whistle-blowers' Bill wins support of MPs

NICHOLAS TIMMINS

Public Policy Editor

A Bill to protect individuals who blow the whistle on crime or malpractice at work cleared its first Commons hurdle by 118 votes to nil yesterday - despite the Government making plain its opposition.

The Bill appeared to have got through to its committee stage, however, because of an error by

Government whips who failed to ensure it was talked out after John Taylor, the junior trade and industry minister, told MPs it represented "neither a practical nor desirable way forward".

Without Government backing, the Bill is set to fail despite cross-party support and the hopes that it would be given a fair wind in the wake of the Scott report and commitments to more open government.

The Bill would provide some protection for those who exposed serious malpractice at work in both the public and private sectors, providing they raised the issue internally first, could convince a court they were acting in the public interest, and did not seek financial gain from their actions. Individuals could seek injunctions preventing reprisals, while the £11,000 limit on compensation

for unfair dismissal in such circumstances would be lifted.

Mr Taylor told MPs that "in a vast range of the public service" effective procedures for the "undoubtedly preferable option" of internal whistleblowing already existed. The Bill was therefore unnecessary. He also maintained - to bar denials from the Bill's sponsors, who included Ian Duncan-Smith, the Conservative MP for Chingford

- that it would impose "a considerable burden on industry".

Mr Duncan-Smith said the Bill was "not about regulation". It simply encouraged best practice, ensuring companies did not "try to cut corners where they shouldn't".

Don Touhig, Labour MP for Islwyn, the Bill's originator, said there were many examples, from the Zeebrugge ferry disaster to the Piper Alpha platform explosion, in which lives had been lost where employees had kept quiet about malpractice for fear of losing their jobs.

Several Conservatives spoke against the Bill claiming it would be a "whingers' charter" but Anthony Coombs, the Wyre Forest MP, said it was a "valuable measure", which would protect the individual against large enterprise and the state. "I believe that is a very sound

Conservative principle." Alan Howarth, who defected to Labour last year, said a whistle-blower at Matrix Churchill had provided evidence to Whitehall that the firm's equipment was being used to make shell cases, and the legal protection for responsible whistle-blowers that this Bill provides would be a valuable additional protection to our liberties and to public safety".

Mr Taylor said he applauded Mr Touhig's motives, but the Bill would be very uncertain in its effect, leaving both employees and employers unsure what would constitute public interest.

After the vote, Mr Touhig argued that it was "significant" in the wake of the Scott report that the Government had "wisely decided not to test this measure by putting its supporters through the lobby".

Hewitt affair returns to haunt Diana

LOUISE JURY

The Prince of Wales headed off to the slopes of Klosters this weekend as the Princess of Wales was facing embarrassment from her former lover the ex-army captain James Hewitt, who has given his first television interview on their affair.

New of the potentially explosive revelations from Mr Hewitt came as lawyers acting for the Prince and Princess attempted quiet diplomacy over their divorce negotiations.

A royal war of words broke out on Wednesday after the Princess announced that she had had a private meeting with her husband that afternoon and agreed to end the marriage.

She said they had agreed she would take the title Diana, Princess of Wales, and continue to live at Kensington Palace. But Buckingham Palace expressed surprise and said all details remained to be settled.

The contradictory statements prompted a tough letter from Anthony Julius, the Princess's solicitor, to Fiona Shackleton at Farrow and Co, who acts for the Prince. Mr Julius warned: "If we cannot rely on agreements that have been made, it would be unsafe to continue negotiations."

Late yesterday, Jane Atkinson, the Princess's press adviser, said a response had been received and Mr Julius was now considering the situation. But she said: "We are giving no information about it at all. The

discussions now between the lawyers are absolutely confidential." She said the Princess, who pulled out of an engagement on Thursday in distress, had recovered her spirits.

A spokeswoman for the Prince's solicitor, Fiona Shackleton, said she had nothing to say - a view repeated by Buckingham Palace.

The silence left royal watchers with the more gossipy revelation that Mr Hewitt, the 37-year-old former Army captain, has given a filmed interview to the journalist Anna Pasternak, who wrote a much-derided book about his relations with the Princess.

Sebastian Rich, a former ITN cameraman, was named as the film crew for the kiss-and-tell footage in which Mr Hewitt reportedly answers 130 questions about every aspect of his royal liaison. Miss Pasternak, 29, said: "Mr Hewitt is very frank, honest and candid about their physical relationship, in the same way as the Princess was in her *Panorama* interview."

Broadcasting experts estimated the film could fetch a seven-figure sum with worldwide interest, heightened by the royal divorce. The London office of the American network CBS News said: "There was a scramble for Diana's *Panorama* interview and this is undoubtedly going to be the same."

In her interview, the Princess said she had "adored" Mr Hewitt, "but I was very let down".

Up on the roof: Dr Robert Anderson, director of the British Museum, in front of the domed Reading Room

REBECCA FOWLER

The British Museum will receive £30m lottery money towards a new glass roof for the Great Court, designed by Sir Norman Foster, which will be opened for the first time in 150 years for the millennium.

The two and a half-acre site

at the centre of the museum, which receives 6 million visitors a year, will be transformed into a piazza, with galleries, restaurants and rest areas. It includes the Round Reading Room, which will be opened to the public for the first time.

Dr Robert Anderson, director of the museum, said: "The

trustees and staff are delighted we can make a very significant contribution to the celebration of the new millennium."

He added: "The Great Court will enhance the British Museum's position as one of the leading international museums and it will help us deal with major problems of overcrowding."

The idea of a glass roof for the courtyard, which formed part of the original building of the 1820s, was first mooted in 1852, using the same technology as the Crystal Palace.

When the British Library, based in the Round Reading Room where Karl Marx once studied, announced three years ago it was going to move to St Pancras, the scheme was re-visited, with the intention of transforming the inner court into the focus of the building, as it was originally intended.

The total cost of the renovation, which will begin in 1998, will be £72m. The museum has raised £21m independently.

Museum wins £30m lottery grant for new roof

REBECCA FOWLER

The British Museum will receive £30m lottery money towards a new glass roof for the Great Court, designed by Sir Norman Foster, which will be opened for the first time in 150 years for the millennium.

The two and a half-acre site

at the centre of the museum, which receives 6 million visitors a year, will be transformed into a piazza, with galleries, restaurants and rest areas. It includes the Round Reading Room, which will be opened to the public for the first time.

Dr Robert Anderson, director of the museum, said: "The

trustees and staff are delighted we can make a very significant contribution to the celebration of the new millennium."

He added: "The Great Court will enhance the British Museum's position as one of the leading international museums and it will help us deal with major problems of overcrowding."

The idea of a glass roof for the courtyard, which formed part of the original building of the 1820s, was first mooted in 1852, using the same technology as the Crystal Palace.

When the British Library, based in the Round Reading Room where Karl Marx once studied, announced three years ago it was going to move to St Pancras, the scheme was re-visited, with the intention of transforming the inner court into the focus of the building, as it was originally intended.

The total cost of the renovation, which will begin in 1998, will be £72m. The museum has raised £21m independently.



Photograph Philip Meech

From just £30

the RAC

covers you

in any

car.

From just £30 for a full 12 months' cover, no one

offers you

more

security

on the

road

than the RAC.

■ RAC Rescue covers you, not your car. So now you can call on us whenever you need fast roadside assistance, even when you're simply a passenger in someone else's car.

■ Roadside Rescue. In more than 8 out of 10 cases, our patrols can fix cars on the spot. Otherwise, they'll tow you to a nearby garage, free of charge.

■ Accident Service. A replacement car, free legal advice, plus we'll deal with your insurers.

■ Theft and Vandalism Cover. If your car's stolen or can't be driven because of vandalism, we'll remove it to a nearby garage or secure area.

■ Battery Assist. A new battery on the spot.

Whatever service you use, callouts and our labour are free - you only pay for parts.

You can also tailor your cover to meet your needs, with the option to take out Joint and Family Cover or add our 'At Home' service.

Don't wait until you break down. Find out how to join the RAC today.

PHONE FREE TODAY ON

0800 029 029

OR INTERNET

<http://www.rac.co.uk/>

AND QUOTE SS1942/3/XX

FREE

1996 RAC ROAD ATLAS

RRP £8.99

When you join the RAC today

Send to: RAC Rescue, FREEPOST, Bristol BS38 7AU. (No stamp needed.)

Postage and

stamp

needed.

ST0004/SS1942/3/XX

1996 RAC ROAD ATLAS

RRP £8.99

When you join the RAC today

Send to: RAC Rescue, FREEPOST, Bristol BS38 7AU. (No stamp needed.)

Postage and

stamp

needed.

ST0004/SS1942/3/XX

1996 RAC ROAD ATLAS

RRP £8.99

When you join the RAC today

Send to: RAC Rescue, FREEPOST, Bristol BS38 7AU. (No stamp needed.)

Postage and

stamp

needed.

ST0004/SS1942/3/XX

1996 RAC ROAD ATLAS

RRP £8.99

When you join the RAC today

Send to: RAC Rescue, FREEPOST, Bristol BS38 7AU. (No stamp needed.)

Postage and

stamp

needed.

ST0004/SS1942/3/XX

1996 RAC ROAD ATLAS

RRP £8.99

When you join the RAC today

Send to: RAC Rescue, FREEPOST, Bristol BS38 7AU. (No stamp needed.)

Postage and

stamp

needed.

ST0004/SS1942/3/XX

1996 RAC ROAD ATLAS

RRP £8.99

When you join the RAC today

Send to: RAC Rescue, FREEPOST, Bristol BS38 7AU. (No stamp needed.)

Postage and

stamp

needed.

ST0004/SS1942/3/XX

1996 RAC ROAD ATLAS

RRP £8.99

When you join the RAC today

Send to: RAC Rescue, FREEPOST, Bristol BS38 7AU. (No stamp needed.)

Postage and

stamp

needed.

ST0004/SS1942/3/XX

1996 RAC ROAD ATLAS

RRP £8.99

When you join the RAC today

Send to: RAC Rescue, FREEPOST, Bristol BS38 7AU. (No stamp needed.)

Postage and

stamp

needed.

ST0004/SS1942/3/XX

1996 RAC ROAD ATLAS

RRP £8.99

When you join the RAC today

Motorways will grind to a halt in 20 years

CHRISTIAN WOLMAR
Transport Correspondent

Large sections of the motorway and trunk road network will be severely congested at both peak and off-peak times in 20 years time, according to maps produced by the Department of Transport and released yesterday by the RAC.

The maps show that at present there are only a few "hotspots", such as the M25 and parts of the road network around Manchester, Birmingham and Leeds.

Using Department of Transport projections which suggest traffic growth of between 83 and 142 per cent from the late 1980s, the maps suggest that by the year 2015 - even on low traffic growth estimates - large parts of the motorway network in the South-east will experience long periods of congestion.

All strategic routes, the whole of the South-west and large areas of the Midlands and the North will have severe congestion problems.

The maps are based on the assumption that there will be no road improvements beyond those now under construction, such as the Newbury bypass and the M11 link roads.

The roads programme has been hit badly by the past two budgets, with a total cut of over a quarter from the 1994/95 peak. No new big starts are scheduled for the forthcoming year because of overspending on past schemes and a reduction in the money available.

The RAC says that the maps show that the present lack of a coherent government policy on transport has disastrous long-term consequences. Edmund King, campaigns manager of the RAC, said: "We have been stuck without a long-term transport policy for years. The Government has not come up with any idea on what to do about congestion, but it has been happy to slash the roads programme. This just doesn't add up." Mr King says the details contained in the maps "condemn the motorist to at least 10 years of chaos and increasingly severe congestion".

The maps will be seized upon by both sides of the transport debate as evidence of failed policy. The environmentalists argue that even with massive spending on roads there would be little improvement as the congestion crisis is growing faster than any feasible road programme Britain could afford.

Roger Higman, transport campaigner with Friends of the Earth, said: "This just shows that we need policies to stem the growth in traffic, not to try to accommodate it by concreting over large sections of Britain."

The pro-roads lobby suggests, however, that the roads programme must be reinstated to its former levels. Mark Glover, spokesman for the British Roads Federation, said: "Unless we are prepared to increase road capacity, users will have to pay a massive cost in terms of congestion."



Made in Japan: The 1996 2-litre Mitsouka Galue

Rolls unfazed by imitation model

ROS WYNNE-JONES

The battle of the Rollers has begun. Representing Britain is the hand-built 1973 Silver Shadow with a walnut veneer dashboard and a 6.7-litre engine. Flying the flag for Japan is the 1996 Mitsouka Galue, a 2-litre dead ringer for the English classic, minus the Spirit of Ecstasy statuette. The brand new Japanese version, which translates literally as "doing it my way", costs slightly less than the second-hand original.

Rolls-Royce, due to launch three new models at next week's Geneva Motor Show, is unfazed by the competition. The car, the ultimate choice for Lady Penelope in the Seventies television show *Thunderbirds*, is just as popular in the Nineties with young celebrity owners ranging from Noel Gallagher of Oasis to the boys in *Take That*.

"All we would be concerned about was if someone was using our trademarks," said a spokeswoman for Rolls-Royce. "Bodywork is not a trademark and they have not used the Spir-

it of Ecstasy as far as we are aware, so although we are looking into the matter we are not too worried."

The company's cool confidence is borne out by the loyalty of its customers. The novelist Dame Barbara Cartland, who owned the very first white Silver Shadow, built especially for her in the 1960s, was horrified to hear the Japanese had dared launch a rival. "This is very worrying," she said yesterday. "I am very concerned about British cars - you just don't see them on the roads nowadays. I would never buy a Japanese car and certainly not a cheap imitation of a Rolls-Royce. It's disgraceful."

Jim Bowen, the comedian, found there was nothing funny about a foreign imitation of his beloved Silver Shadow. "You've only got to sit in a Rolls-Royce to know it can't be copied cheaply. It must be made of *itin*, with an *MF* interior."

"It's a ludicrous idea. You can buy an original from 1975 for less than the price of the imitation, so what's the point?"

Bridgewater case man's suicide bid

One of the men convicted of the murder of the newspaper boy Carl Bridgewater has tried to commit suicide after hearing that hopes of a new appeal had been dashed, it was disclosed yesterday.

Vincent Hickey, 41, was treated in the hospital wing of Long Lartin prison, near Evesham, Worcestershire, after slashing his wrists on Thursday.

He had been found covered in blood in his cell.

A Prison Service spokesman said the attempt appeared to be "a determined effort". Although the injuries were serious, they were not life-threatening.

Hickey, his 33-year-old cousin Michael, and James Robinson, 61, are serving life sentences for the murder of 13-year-old Carl.



By royal appointment: Canon Marion Mingins reflecting on her new honorary title yesterday. Photograph: Findlay Kember

Female chaplain gets royal seal

JOJO MOYES

In a move that is being seen as a sign of approval of the ordination of women priests, the Queen has appointed the first female canon at St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, where the bishop, the Right Rev John Dennis, said the appointment was "a very great tribute to her and the quality of her ministry".

The former social worker from Tyneside said she was delighted with her appointment to the principally ceremonial post, which dates back to the Middle Ages.

"I have not been privy to the extent the Queen made the running on my appointment, but the fact remains she is the supreme governor of the Church of England," said Canon Mingins yesterday.

"In appointing a woman as royal chaplain it appears to be a vote of confidence in the ordination of women which is why I am particularly pleased."

Canon Mingins, 43, was among the first women to be ordained as a Church of England deacon when she was given the title at Southwark Cathedral in 1987.

She was ordained a full priest in April 1994, soon after the church changed its rules to allow women priests, and for the last five years has been a residential canon at St Edmundsbury Cathedral in Bury St Edmunds, Suffolk, where the bishop, the Right Rev John Dennis, said the appointment was "a very great tribute to her and the quality of her ministry".

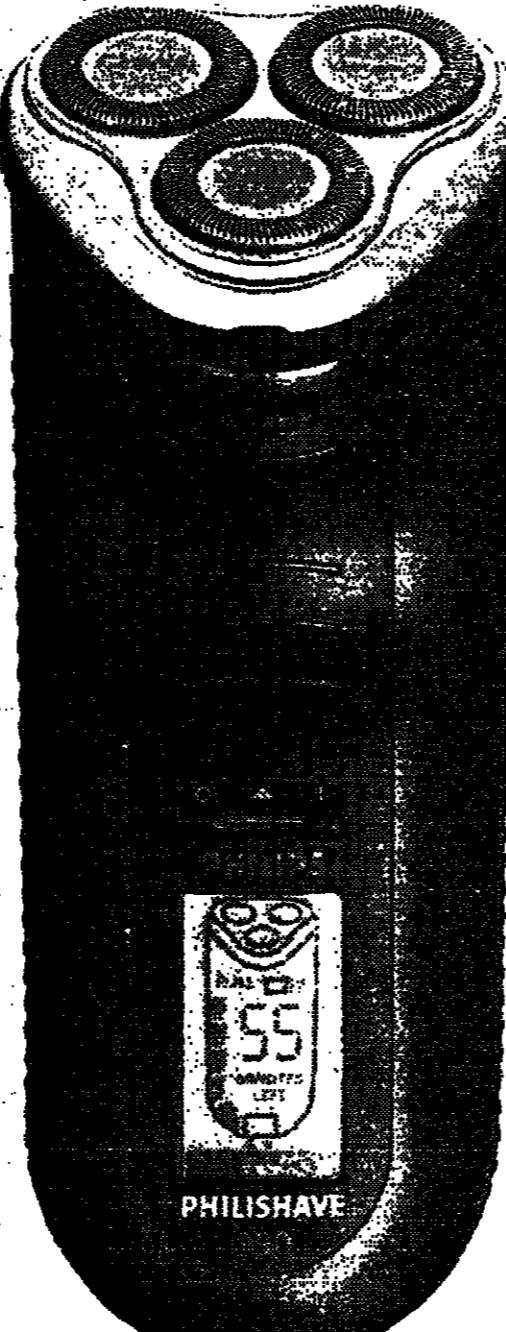
The former social worker from Tyneside said she was delighted with her appointment to the principally ceremonial post, which dates back to the Middle Ages.

"Many areas of ministerial responsibility in the church which had been previously closed to women are now opening up to them and this is just the latest example," she said, adding: "The appointment is a considerable personal honour."

A Buckingham Palace spokesman said the Queen had a woman royal chaplain in the Church of Scotland, but that Canon Mingins was the first in the Church of England.

PHILISHAVE®

A FREE GIFT FROM PHILISHAVE: UP TO £15 BACK.



£15 CASH BACK ON THIS
HS990 SHAVER. MRP £119.95*

Offer applies to UK only. Your receipt will be returned with your cheque. Allow 28 days for delivery. *Manufacturer's Recommended Price.

Let's make things better



PHILIPS

Mail staff to deliver new wood for Dales

NIGEL BURNHAM

The Yorkshire Dales national park yesterday announced that a new 'wood', named after its sponsors, the Royal Mail, is to be planted beside the Pennine Way and the River Aire at Aitton in Malhamdale, near Skipton.

Royal Mail Wood will comprise 750 broad-leaved trees, including ash, oak and rowan, paid for out of £10,000 raised by staff of Royal Mail North East.

The project, launched with the planting of the first tree next Wednesday, will be the first wood to be planted under sponsorship in the national park. Royal Mail managers and staff will be involved in the work, helping to prepare footpaths, erecting foot bridges and organising work parties to coordinate the planting of the one-acre wood.

A spokesman dismissed criticism of the wood's name and objections from local conservationists, who told the national park: "Corporate sponsorship and national parks do not mix."

"There's nothing wrong with the name," said the spokesman. "We're not talking about Sherwood Forest here – it's just a little wood that reflects our desire to have a positive impact on the welfare of the community, in particular through environmental work."

Richard Witt, development officer for the Yorkshire Dales national park, said: "A lot of people might not like the name, but we feel it's a small price to pay to give the landscape additional character and beauty, as well as being a vital refuge for wild animals and plants."



Well wrapped up: A model on the catwalk at the Betty Jackson show, part of London Fashion Week, yesterday
Photograph: Peter Macdiarmid

Family to sue hospital

A coroner yesterday recorded a misadventure verdict on a teenager who died after routine cosmetic surgery to have her hair pinned back. The family of Janine Connor, 14, are now planning to sue the hospital where the operation took place.

After the inquest, Janine's mother, Mrs Margaret Usher, said it was "horrendous" that 10 doctors in the operating theatre at Withington Hospital, Manchester, were unable to work life-saving equipment because it was so old that none of them was trained to use it.

The two-day inquest heard how Janine, of Ashton-under-Lyne, agreed to surgery on 4 January last year under general anaesthesia after originally intending to have a local anaesthetic. An anaesthetist noticed that her face was swelling as she

came round and Janine then suffered a cardiac arrest.

Doctors said gas was not escaping from her body after being pumped in by a ventilator and this affected her heart.

When doctors tried to give her electric shocks from two 25-year-old defibrillator machines, they were unable to because they did not know that at least 5lb of pressure had to be applied to the paddles on her chest. Up to 10 minutes were lost before a third defibrillator, which could be used, was found.

Eventually, doctors had to cut open her chest and manually massage her heart. But Janine never regained consciousness and died six days later at the Royal Manchester Children's Hospital, in Pendlebury.

Giving his verdict, Mr Coppej said the 20-year-old victim

lator machine used was regarded as "a good solid workhorse" and the mystery of what had gone wrong to cause Janine's breathing problem remained unresolved.

On the use of the defibrillators – which were regularly maintained – he added: "None of them knew about the old-fashioned *modus operandi* though there was a set of written instructions. I suppose under pressure one doesn't look to see something in writing."

Neil Kinsella, solicitor for the family, said they had been granted legal aid to pursue a negligence claim. "At this stage there is no satisfactory explanation of what went wrong to cause Janine to go into cardiac arrest. The chances of her being resuscitated look as though they were reduced."

Inquiry over delay to hospital wing

NICHOLAS TIMMINS

Public Policy Editor

The National Audit Office is to launch a full investigation into a four-year delay and huge cost over-runs at a proposed new wing at Guy's Hospital, in south London. The former Philip Harris House, once proclaimed as a flagship, state-of-the-art creation, is fast becoming the biggest building disaster in the health service's history.

The NAO – the Government spending watchdog – confirmed it is to follow up a preliminary investigation with a full inquiry into the reasons for delay and cost over-runs in a project now expected to be four years late and to have cost £152m, almost double the original £79m estimate.

Simon Hughes, the Liberal Democrat MP for Bermondsey, claimed figures he has been provided with show that the NHS Trust has "wasted" millions following the latest round of negotiations with the contractors Higgs and Higgs.

He said the trust was written off £5m in penalties for missed completion deadlines, and agreed another £2m to complete a building now known as Phase Three after Sir Philip Harris withdrew a promised £6m donation when its use was changed as part of the controversial merger of Guy's and St Thomas's hospitals.

Mr Hughes said: "The building will be four years late and yet instead of the trust being compensated by the builders they are actually paying out. It is a scandal that it has taken so long for it to be completed when we are crying out for the services it is meant to provide."

England faces double-inflation council tax rise

WILL BENNETT

People living in the most modest homes in Liverpool will pay more council tax than the wealthiest inhabitants of Westminster when council tax bills will go up from £589 to £730 on Band D properties in the middle of the price range, an increase of nearly 24 per cent. The figure was published too late to be included in either survey.

According to two surveys published yesterday, the average rise will be about 6 per cent – less than the 8 per cent increase predicted by the Government across the United Kingdom. But the final figure will rise when details from some London councils are published.

Liverpool is likely to set the highest rate, with a recommendation for a Band D tax of £1000.82, an increase of 3.9 per cent. Even the most modest homes in Band A there will face a rate of £657.21, which is more than the inhabitant of a large house in Westminster, who is

likely to face a bill of £590 in Band H, the highest.

Labour-controlled Southwark, in south London, yesterday revealed that its council tax will go up from £589 to £730 on Band D properties in the middle of the price range, an increase of nearly 24 per cent. The figure was published too late to be included in either survey.

Martin Pilgrim, finance under-secretary at the Association of Metropolitan Authorities, warned that rises could have been much higher but councils were cutting expenditure and drawing heavily on reserves to keep tax increases down.

Tory-controlled Westminster City Council is using £8.3m of reserves to keep council tax bill for Band D properties down to £295, a 7 per cent rise. A 20 per cent increase had been recommended by the council's chief executive.

One of the surveys was

compiled by the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy for BBC Radio 4's *Today* programme, which obtained figures for council tax rises from two-thirds of the billing authorities in England. The tax raises the difference between the amount councils budget to spend and the money they receive from central government.

The survey reveals that average bills for properties in Band D will increase by £37 to £646, a 6.1 per cent increase. The increases are highest in the West Midlands (7.4 per cent), Greater London (7.3 per cent) and the rest of South-east England (6.9 per cent) and lowest in northern England (4.9 per cent). The rate of inflation was 2.9 per cent in January.

The second survey, which was carried out by the *Local Government Chronicle*, which covered more than one-third of English councils, comes up with a similar figure, an average rise of 6.1 per cent or £35.60. It shows huge differences between individual councils.

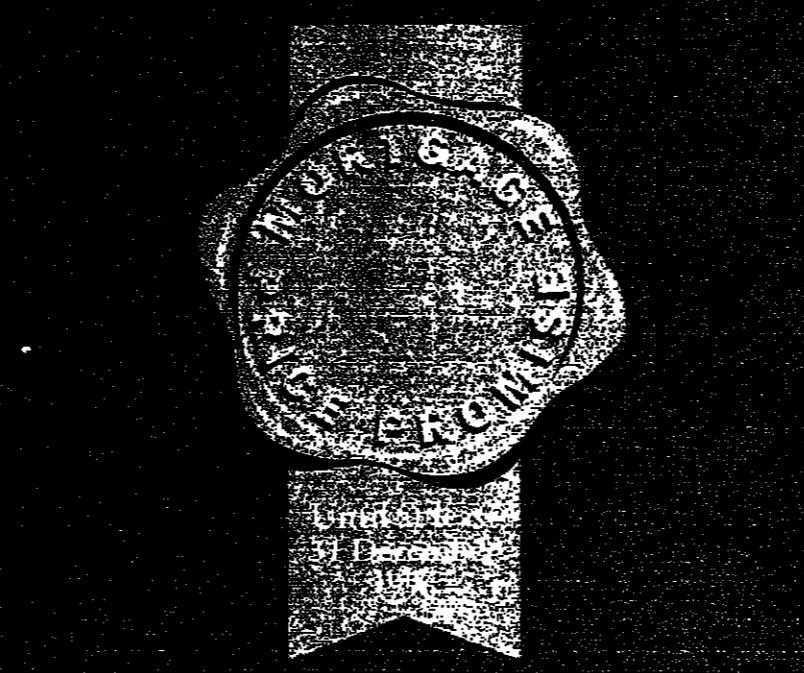
The biggest rise found by this survey is in Rochester, Kent, where the Band D increase will be 17.9 per cent, followed by Chertsey, Oxfordshire, with 16.1 per cent, and Wolverhampton with 15.2 per cent. A 10.3 per cent rise in Hartlepool, Cleveland, will push the Band D rate to £839.

Scots face average council tax rises of 15% – but for many the rise could be far higher. Scottish councils, which meet next week to fix budgets warn of big rises and spending cuts.

How the increases compare			
	Average Band D equivalent 1995-96 96-97	% Increase	Total rise
Greater London	£575.60	£617.60	7.3
Met. districts	£78.41	725.58	7.0
Non-Met. districts	£58.74	£59.42	5.5
All England	£69.11	£64.06	6.1
South-east (excl London)	£58.06	£607.04	6.9
East Anglia	£60.32	£595.23	6.2
East Midlands	£63.20	£644.52	5.1
Northern	£77.45	£710.47	4.9
North-west	£70.58	£744.88	5.5
South-west	£56.49	£623.63	4.6
West Midlands	£62.97	£658.53	7.4
Yorkshire and Humberside	£60.86	£659.90	4.6

"The lowest-cost mortgages over the last 5 years from any major high street lender."

What Mortgage awards 1996



As our two What Mortgage awards confirm, C&G's commitment to reducing mortgage costs is paying dividends, helped in no small measure by our Mortgage Price Promise.

7.24% 7.5% APR

And our Promise means our standard variable mortgage rate is currently down to a competitive 7.24% 7.5% APR.

There's no valuation fee to pay with any C&G mortgage and our 'no strings' policy means we don't charge mortgage indemnity premiums and we don't insist you buy your insurance from us.

With a C&G Cash Gift Mortgage you also receive up to £7,500 as a gift just a few days after you take out your mortgage. The Cash Gift will be equal to 3% of the amount you borrow.

You can even arrange your mortgage by phone through C&G Mortgage Direct if visiting a branch is inconvenient.

For details of how you could benefit from these offers, including our Mortgage Price Promise, visit your nearest C&G or Lloyds Bank branch or call us today.

CALL US NOW. RING FREE ON
0800 272 131
OR FAX 01452 373 681
INTERNET: www.cheltglos.co.uk

To: Cheltenham & Gloucester,
FREEPOST, Gloucester GL4 7BR.

Please send me details of your Cash Gift Mortgage and Mortgage Price Promise (I am over the age of 18).

Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms _____ Initial(s) _____

Surname _____

Address _____

Postcode _____ Tel. _____

C&G
Cheltenham & Gloucester
We're run to make you richer

The Cash Gift Mortgage is at C&G's standard variable mortgage rate. You will need to put down a minimum personal deposit of 10% or more (5% for existing C&G or Lloyds Bank mortgage customers moving home). The Cash Gift is 5% of the loan amount up to a maximum payment of £7,500. The Inland Revenue has said that the Cash Gift may be subject to Capital Gains Tax. The Cash Gift must be repaid if, within the first five years, the mortgage is redeemed or converted to another C&G mortgage unless it is at our standard variable mortgage rate (excluding Cash Gift and any special offers available at the time). If the loan is partly redeemed, the Cash Gift must be repaid on a pro-rata basis. Typical example assumes an interest rate of 7.24% and an interest only loan of £50,000 secured over 25 years and a purchase price of £70,000; 300 monthly payments of £245.52 net of tax at 15%. The original £50,000 must be repaid at the end of the mortgage term. Total amount payable £14,255.85 including C&G's redemption administrative charge (currently £15). APR = 7.5% (variable). You must be at least 18 years old to apply for a loan. Please ask us if you would like a written quotation. Before agreeing a loan we will normally value the property and will assess your ability to meet the repayments. All loans will require security in the form of a mortgage over the property. Interest rates may vary during the period of the loan. Although there is no application or valuation fee for any C&G mortgage, if you want to arrange a C&G fixed-rate mortgage there is a reservation charge to secure fixed-rate funds.

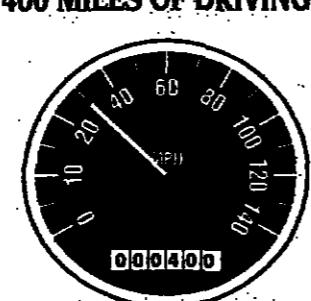
Cheltenham & Gloucester plc Barnett Way Gloucester GL4 3JR

CORK & KERRY. BEAT THE CLOCK!

SLEEP OVER
ARRIVING AT 7am



SAVE OVER
400 MILES OF DRIVING



And while you rested
you've already saved up to
200 miles of tiring driving, with a
further 200 to save on the return
trip. 400 miles saved and not a day
of your holiday lost.

FROM
£149
RETURN
CAB & FIVE ADULTS

01792
456116
or contact your local travel agent

SWANSEA CORK FERRIES
Miles ahead of the rest

YOUR HOME IS AT RISK IF YOU DO NOT KEEP UP REPAYMENTS
ON A MORTGAGE OR OTHER LOAN SECURED ON IT

What Mortgage awards 1996: Best value-for-money standard variable rate mortgages over the last 2 and 5 years, of all national building societies and banks, based on a loan of £50,000.

international

British businessman expelled by Moscow

PHIL REEVES

Moscow

The Foreign Office said yesterday it was seeking an explanation from Moscow over why a British businessman has been thrown out of Russia for "activities incompatible with his status" - a Cold War-era term used to denote spying.

It is the second time Nigel Shakespeare, a former assistant military attaché with the British embassy, has felt the wrath of the Moscow authorities, as he was among eight British diplomats and three journalists who were thrown out in May 1989 after the same number of Russian diplomats and media workers were ordered out of Britain.

The move is further evidence of Russia's erratic relations with the West, which have veered from warm enthusiasm to cool uncertainty in the last few months, and have given rise

to fears that the new Foreign Minister, Vsevolod Primakov, has hard-line tendencies. Mr Shakespeare, 46, was ordered aboard a flight to London by Russian officials after flying into Sheremetyevo airport from a 10-day business trip to Kazakhstan. He had been working in Moscow for Gorandel Trading, which offers security and risk management.

Although the officials supplied him with no explanation for their decision at the time - it happened on 15 February, but details only emerged yesterday - the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs said the security services (the heirs to the KGB) had found "negative elements in his activities" which were "not compatible" with his status as a businessman.

"He was not expelled. His visa was terminated," said Alexander Golitsin, a senior Foreign Ministry official. He

suggested spying might be "too strong" a word for the allegations against Mr Shakespeare, yet hinted that the move was related to the Briton's former job as a diplomat. The affair would not affect the "friendly relations" between Russia and the United Kingdom, he added.

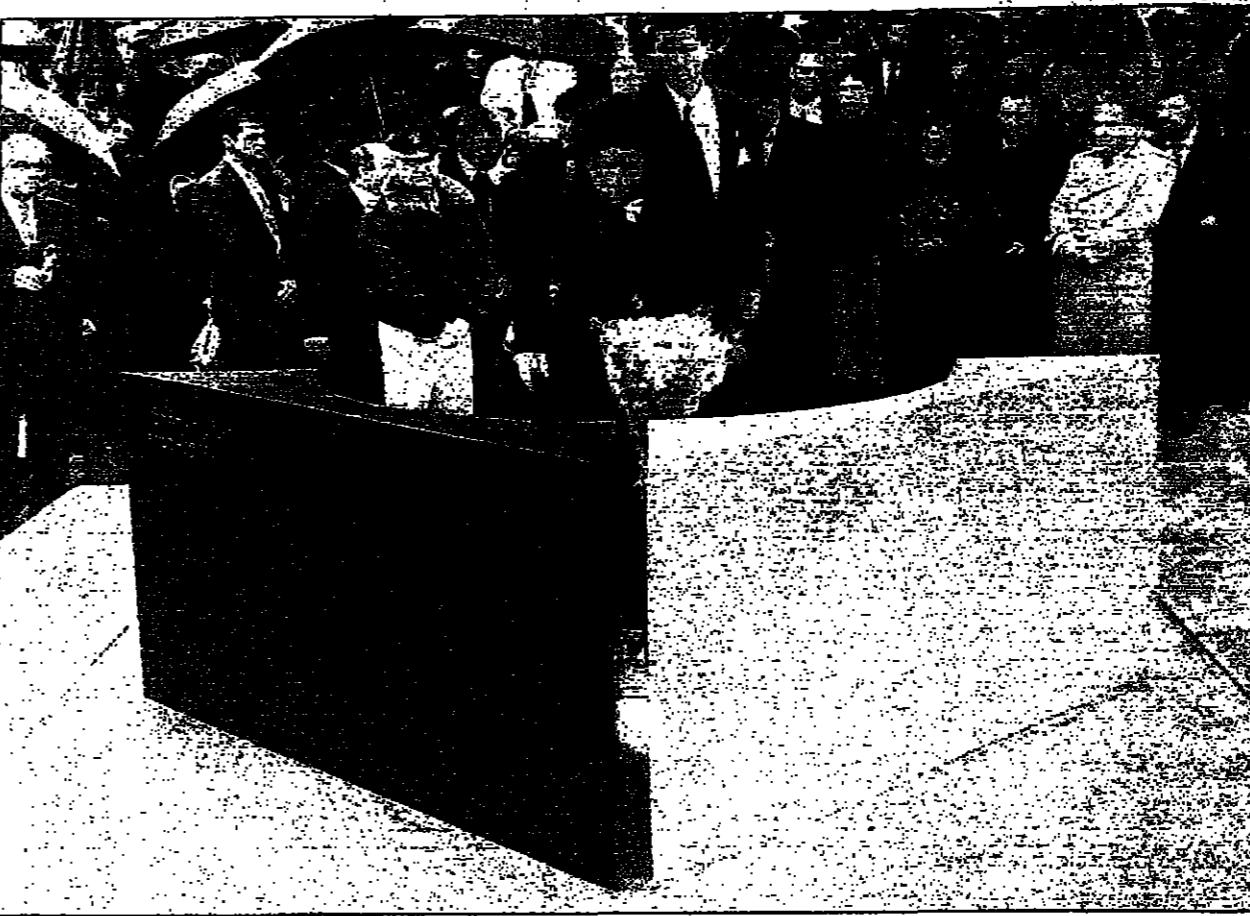
Mr Shakespeare, speaking from north London, rejected any suggestion that he had been a spy: "I categorically deny it. My response is that the charge is totally unjustified." He refused to speculate over why he had been expelled, saying that he had no idea and that it was "totally unfair".

The British embassy in Moscow said that had not been told why Mr Shakespeare was forced to leave the country, and was seeking clarification. But the Foreign Office has made clear that it regards the manner in which he was abruptly sent home as unacceptable.

He had no opportunity to contact diplomats or his family before being ushered on to a plane. "We shall be raising his treatment - and particularly his treatment at the airport - with the Russians," said James Pavel, an embassy spokesman.

Mr Shakespeare began travelling to Russia in 1992. Thirteen months ago he moved to Moscow permanently, with his wife, Rosalind and child, Clara. Until January, he worked with accountants Price Waterhouse, before leaving to work for Gorandel, believed to be a British-Russian joint venture. Robin Hall, a former colleague at Price Waterhouse, said: "As far as I know, he was completely unaware the Russian authorities had him down as a spy."

A steady trickle of expulsions for alleged spying have continued. Last July Alexander Malikov, a Russian journalist, left Britain accused of spying.



Yitzhak Rabin's widow, Leah, lays flowers on his tomb in Jerusalem yesterday. Photograph: David Silverman/Reuters



Have a shot at winning a trip to the 1996 Olympic Games with Visa.
Apply for a NatWest Visa card.

The atmosphere's electric, the crowd goes wild, it's a new world record. And you could be right there in the heart of it to witness sports history in the making, if you win our fantastic competition.

All you have to do to enter, is apply for a NatWest Visa card straight away, correctly answer five questions and complete the tie-breaker.

The winner will enjoy a fabulous all-expenses-paid five day trip for two to the

Olympic Games, plus \$500 spending money.

Twenty runners-up will each receive a super Kodak Cameo camera.

Call 0800 616 848

MONDAY to FRIDAY 8.00am to 8.00pm.

WEEKENDS 9.00am to 4.00pm

Closing date for entries is 30 April 1996, so get off the starting blocks. To obtain your NatWest Visa card application form, either call 0800 616 848, send off the coupon, or pop into your nearest NatWest branch.

NatWest
More than just a bank

Closing date for entries 30 April 1996

Credit Cards are only available to persons aged 18 or over and subject to status and conditions. NatWest Visa APR 23.4% for purchases and 25.3% for cash advances (subject to cash handling fee), including the purchase of foreign currency and travellers' cheques. The annual fee is £12. If the Principal Cardholder maintains both NatWest Access and Visa accounts, one annual fee is chargeable and such fee may be charged to either account. The APR for the account without the annual fee will be 21.9% for purchases and 23.8% for cash advances (subject to a cash handling fee), including the purchase of foreign currency and travellers' cheques. If the outstanding balance on your monthly statement is less than £5, you must pay it off by the due date shown on your statement. If your outstanding balance is more than £5, you must pay £5 or 5% of the outstanding balance, whichever is the greater. A cash handling fee of 1.5% minimum charge of £1.50, is payable on each cash advance and the purchase of foreign currency and travellers' cheques. An administration levy of 2.75% of the transaction amount is payable on each foreign currency transaction. The interest rate, the annual fee and cash handling fee may vary.



Israel spurns Hamas offer to halt bombing

PATRICK COCKBURN

Jerusalem

Israel yesterday rejected an offer by the Hamas Islamic militant organisation to call off its suicide bombing campaign in return for the release of its prisoners and immunity from

to be costing the Palestinian economy \$4m (£2.6m) a day in lost wages and exports, have caused a backlash against Hamas among Palestinians who have blamed the group for their financial hardships.

Israeli security services say that the orders to launch the suicide bomb attacks last Sunday, which killed 23 Israelis, were given by the Hamas leadership in Damascus. Izzedine al-Qassam in Gaza says it was not involved, which, if true, means that Hamas is split. This is precisely what Mr Arafat has been trying to achieve in the past, but the fragmentation of the organisation makes it more difficult to control.

Labour party strategists have little doubt that more suicide bombs will mean that it will certainly lose the election to be held on 29 May. The bombs have strengthened the opposition Likud bloc by persuading David Levy, the former foreign minister, to lead his small breakaway party, Gesher, back into the fold in return for seven guaranteed seats in the Knesset (parliament).

"In general, Israel does not negotiate with the terror cells of Hamas," Mr Barak said. Earlier in the week Israel was reported to have said to Mr Arafat that if he would not deal with Hamas, it might open talks with the organisation.

The Israeli Prime Minister, Shimon Peres, has also said that if Mr Arafat does not rein in extremists, Israel may delay the troop withdrawal in the West Bank town of Hebron due at the end of this month.

Mr Peres has warned that the Israeli closure of the West Bank and Gaza Strip, barring 60,000 Palestinian workers from reaching their jobs inside Israel, will stay in effect until the security situation improves.

The border closures, thought

to be costing the Palestinian economy \$4m (£2.6m) a day in lost wages and exports, have caused a backlash against Hamas among Palestinians who have blamed the group for their financial hardships.

Israeli security services say that the orders to launch the suicide bomb attacks last Sunday, which killed 23 Israelis, were given by the Hamas leadership in Damascus. Izzedine al-Qassam in Gaza says it was not involved, which, if true, means that Hamas is split. This is precisely what Mr Arafat has been trying to achieve in the past, but the fragmentation of the organisation makes it more difficult to control.

Labour party strategists have little doubt that more suicide bombs will mean that it will certainly lose the election to be held on 29 May. The bombs have strengthened the opposition Likud bloc by persuading David Levy, the former foreign minister, to lead his small breakaway party, Gesher, back into the fold in return for seven guaranteed seats in the Knesset (parliament).

Mr Levy has reportedly been offered the post of foreign minister in a future Likud government.

In the latest poll carried out by the daily *Ma'ariv*, 7 per cent of voters said they had switched from Labour to Likud because of the bomb attacks. Mr Peres led Benjamin Netanyahu, the opposition leader, by 46 per cent to 44 per cent. Two-thirds of voters thought the Israeli army should operate against organisations like Hamas in territories controlled by Mr Arafat.

A similar proportion said they still supported the peace process with the Palestinians.

Gorbachev joins race for presidency

TONY BARBER

Europe Editor

Mikhail Gorbachev, the former Soviet president and Nobel Peace Prize winner, said yesterday he would stand as a candidate in Russia's presidential election in June.

Mr Gorbachev, who is 65 today, made the announcement at a news conference in Moscow at which he portrayed himself as a centrist alternative to President Boris Yeltsin and to the leading challenger, Gennady Zyuganov of the Communist Party.

Recent opinion polls suggest Mr Gorbachev has almost no hope of winning the presidency. Whereas Mr Zyuganov consistently scores 20 per cent or more in the polls, and Mr Yeltsin scores about 10 per cent, Mr Gorbachev's popularity rating is barely 1 per cent.

"His time is past," said Sergei Shatalov, a former minister in Mr Yeltsin's government. "Intellectuals and the West recognise his merits, but that's not enough to win the election."

Mr Gorbachev said he hoped to unite "all democratic forces" behind his candidacy, but it is difficult to see where his support might come from.

Most ordinary voters, in so far as they think of him at all, appear to hold him responsible for the political chaos and economic slump that turned their lives upside down in the late Soviet period.

Nor does he command much sympathy in Russian political



Gorbachev: Slim chance

circles. Reformists blame him for refusing, when he was president, to make a decisive break with Communism and the principle of a united Soviet state, while Communists and nationalists despise him as a traitor.

By throwing his hat into the ring, Mr Gorbachev seems to be calculating that he may at least succeed in disrupting the election campaign of Mr Yeltsin, his bitter rival. The two men have been at odds since 1987, when Mr Gorbachev forced Mr Yeltsin's dismissal from the inner Soviet leadership.

Mr Yeltsin secured his revenge by becoming the champion of the democratic opposition, winning the Russian presidency in June 1991 and organising the dissolution of the Soviet Union after the failed August hardline coup. Mr Gorbachev, who is not a member of a political party, needs 1 million signatures of support by 16 April to be registered as a candidate in the 16 June election.

1996

Cellphones

PHONE 0800

international

Bangkok summit: EU states duck rights issues to avoid a damaging rift with world's strongest economies

Major calls for UN to put its house in order

DONALD MACINTYRE
Bangkok

John Major made a plea for rapid reform in the United Nations yesterday at the EU-Asia economic summit, as most European leaders agreed to avoid confrontation with China and South-East-Asian economic powers over human rights.

Mr Major pressed the case for streamlining the UN and putting it on a firmer financial footing following estimates that it could "run out of money in November". The Prime Minister said it would be "judicious" for the UN to go bust and warned it "must not be allowed to grind to a halt".

He urged Asian countries to back EU proposals for tough penalties on non-payers, to accelerate the payment of arrears and reform contributions to take account of the relative wealth of members.

Mr Major, who won strong support from Thailand for his call for UN reforms, will today call for the liberalisation of Asian markets.

The threat of a walk-out by Indonesia, led by President Suharto, if Portugal used the summit to resume attacks on

human rights abuses in East Timor was averted when the Portuguese Prime Minister, Antonio Guterres, talked informally to the Mr Suharto in the fringes of the summit. The Portuguese leader suggested a resumption of diplomatic contacts between the two countries, which elicited a non-committal response from Mr Suharto.

The Europeans' desire to avoid conflict over human rights reflects the importance attached by the EU to expanding trade relations with the fastest growing economies in the world. Mr Major has repeatedly pointed out that the countries at the summit account for more than half the world's Gross Domestic Product.

Jacques Santer, the EU Commission President, made a plea for Asian countries to accept that the Single European Market "has greatly improved the opportunities for third countries to do business in the European Union".

In a thinly disguised appeal to Asian countries to lower barriers against EU exports, he pointed out that 40 per cent of imports of manufactured goods would be duty-free, while tariffs on other products would be cut by a third in the next decade.

Leon Brittan, the EU Trade Commissioner, has been active pressing Asian countries to open up their vast telecommunications markets, to secure a worldwide liberalisation agreement by the April deadline set by the World Trade Organisation. An aide to Sir Leon admitted they failed to draw a clear response and added: "We are into the last five weeks so it is a very urgent process."

In meetings with the Chinese government, Sir Leon pressed for the level of liberalisation that would enable China to qualify for WTO membership. Sir Leon told the Prime Minister, Li Peng, that China needed to end the monopoly of state organisations running import and export businesses, reduce tariffs and liberalise the car industry. He said if Peking took such steps the EU would back its membership of WTO.

Sir Leon urged Peking to stop restricting the free flow of economic information through overseas news agencies, saying it violated the WTO principles.

He also pressed Li Peng to accept Hong Kong's continued importance as an entrepreneurial centre, and was assured its "capitalism" would survive the handover to China.

Chinese try to calm fears over ill dissident

TERESA POOLE
Peking

Wei Jingsheng, China's most prominent pro-democracy dissident, is in good health apart from hypertension and a "fatty liver", the Chinese government announced yesterday. The unusual medical bulletin on the country's best-known political prisoner followed reports from relatives that Mr Wei, who is 46, was suffering from heart disease, and comes just weeks before China is likely to face attempted censure at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

Last November, the closed court trial of Mr Wei had to be halted for nearly half an hour when he suffered an attack of high blood pressure. The judges later sentenced him to 14 years for attempting to overthrow the government, and since January he has been kept in solitary confinement at the Nanpu

satellite about three hours drive from Peking, occupying the same cell in which he spent the latter part of his earlier 14-year jail term. Since March 1979, Mr Wei has spent only six months out of prison.

Support is growing around the world for Mr Wei's nomination for this year's Nobel Peace Prize. Yesterday, 110 British MPs from all parties signed a Commons motion calling for his immediate release from prison and backing the Nobel nomination. He was also nominated in 1995.

The Xinhua news agency announcement appeared timed for the run-up to the Geneva vote. Since 1990, China has faced an annual motion, sponsored by the United States, condemning its human rights record, although these have so far been defeated because China has lobbied support from developing countries. Mr Wei's nomination

was yesterday passed into law, specifying that martial law may be declared in the case of serious threats to national unity.

Analysts said the Chinese government wanted the law on the statute books before the death of 91-year-old Deng Xiaoping in case of public unrest after the paramount leader passes away.



Glittering assembly: Heads of government gathered for an official photograph in a throne room of the King of Thailand's palace

Photograph: Kamimasa Mayama/Reuters

Howard set for close win in Australia

ROBERT MILLIKEN
Sydney

World War, in 1949, 1972, 1975 and 1983.

Boycotted by opinion polls which suggest he will be Prime Minister after today's general election, John Howard, leader of the Liberal Party, embarked on a barrage of radio and television interviews yesterday to convince swing voters in crucial seats to end the 13-year era of Labor government.

As

his

strategists delivered the results of private party polls, which predicted that the conservative Liberals and their junior coalition partners, the National Party, would pick up more than the seven seats they need to topple Labor, Mr Howard displayed the solemn air of a leader who sensed that the elusive prize which he has pursued for 22 years in politics was finally within his grasp.

For his part, Paul Keating, fighting to win an unprecedented sixth term for Labor, ended his campaign the way he began it, as the underdog. Not for him the radio and television studios of Sydney, from where Mr Howard disseminated his message that Labor had left Australia with record foreign debt and youth unemployment.

The Prime Minister was in Tasmania yesterday, after spending the last three days flying thousands of miles from Cairns in north Queensland, to Adelaide, Canberra and Melbourne, shoring up votes in Labor's most vulnerable seats and calling for a fresh mandate to continue economic and social reforms. He asked Australians to compare his vision of a new, Australian republic, economically engaged in the Asia-Pacific region, with the "philosophically stranded" coalition. "Did we build a new standard, have we created a change?" he asked. "Or do we just not gently off back to sleep again like we did in the Rip Van Winkle years?"

Mr Keating refused to concede the game was up. And, as commentators discovered three years ago, after writing him off under similar circumstances at the last election, he could be right. Australians have rejected incumbent governments only four times since the Second

World War, in 1949, 1972, 1975 and 1983. Voters may be fed up with the Labor government, convinced it has run out of ideas and turned off by what they perceive as Mr Keating's arrogance. But the government is not swamped by scandal or smelling of decay.

Mr Howard is making his second bid to become prime minister, after failing to dislodge Labor under Bob Hawke in 1987. If Mr Howard has a vision for Australia in the next millennium, he has failed to convey it during the campaign. That explains the grudging endorsement of the coalition in the latest opinion polls yesterday.

Having started the campaign

five weeks ago trailing the coalition by 11 points, Labor closed the gap in the three main polls to finish two, three and six points behind respectively. A nationwide poll published in a Brisbane newspaper yesterday gave Labor a one-point lead, the first poll to put Labor ahead. Mr Keating maintained a lead over Mr Howard as preferred prime minister in most polls.

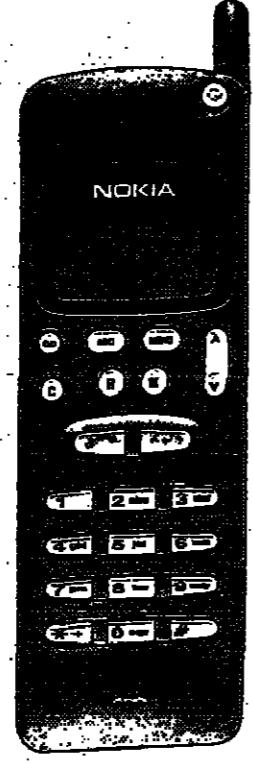
On election eve, it was difficult to measure the impact of the "forged-letters affair", a sensational development on Wednesday, in which a senior Labor minister released letters apparently damaging to the coalition, but which later turned out to be fakes. The Labor Party yesterday issued a statement to federal police investigating the affair, claiming the letters originated in Liberal Party ranks. Liberals accused Labor staff of forging them.

Three of Australia's leading newspapers, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Age*, of Melbourne, and the *Australian Financial Review*, called for a coalition victory yesterday. But two influential newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch went against the grain. The *Australian*, his national flagship, declined to endorse either side, while the *Daily Telegraph*, a mass-circulation Sydney tabloid, backed Mr Keating.

While most papers splashed headlines that predicted Mr Keating's defeat, the Murdoch papers provided upbeat coverage of the final hours of Mr Keating's campaign.

Now free calls and one second billing.

LIMITED OFFER
£9.99
INC. VAT



NOKIA
GSM MODEL 2010.

- 49 name/number memory
- 300 mins talk-time
- 30 hrs standby time
- Complete with standard battery and rapid travel charger
- Weight approx 320g

FREE IN-CAR ADAPTOR/CHARGER
FREE SPARE BATTERY
FREE LEATHER CASE
TOGETHER WORTH OVER £75

GUARANTEED PEACE OF MIND
Our phones are covered by our 14 day
no quibble money back guarantee.

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

£

Gun battle ends hunt for Italian serial killer

ANDREW GUMBEL

Rome

The hunt for a serial killer stalking the sleepy north Italian town of Merano ended in violence yesterday as the culprit claimed two more victims, holed up in a lonely farmhouse with two hostages, and then, after a dramatic gun battle with police, turned the murder weapon on himself.

The man responsible for shooting six people at close range over the past three weeks turned out to be a German-speaking neo-Nazi committed to reunifying the Alto Adige with Austria. All but one of the victims were Italian-speakers.

The alarm was raised in mid-morning when farmers in the hamlet of Rifiano, about six miles from the centre of town, heard gunshots coming from the house of a local bricklayer, Tullio Melchiori. The murderer, Ferdinand Gamper, had killed Melchiori, his landlord, and had forced his wife and daughter at gunpoint to follow him into a barn next door.

When police arrived, Gamper barely gave them time to discover the body before he opened fire, shooting a Carabinieri officer in the head. The officer was whisked to hospital but died three hours later.

Other police took cover in the surrounding woodland. Eventually they fired several volleys of tear gas into the barn, setting the building on fire. The shooting stopped and the police stormed in, to find the two hostages unharmed on the ground floor and the murderer dead with his weapon in his hand. A note in German read:

"You got here too late. He had shot himself through the mouth. With his hulking frame, blond hair and short beard, Ferdinand Gamper, 39, was a perfect fit for the Identikit picture of the murderer developed since the shooting of a factory worker in Merano's main square on Tuesday.

Next to his body was the blue rucksack that was spotted by several witnesses. The gun was a match for the .22 weapon used in the earlier killings.

Among the documents recovered by police were posters and stickers in German, advocating the Alto Adige's reabsorption into Austria. A long note left beside Melchiori's body included a "terrifying" paean to Nazism and an admission which has yet to be verified, that Gamper murdered one or more children.

Merano had been living in fear since 8 February, when a senior Bundesbank official and his Italian fiancée were shot. At first investigators suspected a link with the banker's work or his estranged German wife. They now believe the two were "punished" for wanting to settle in Merano as an ethnically mixed couple. A shrine marking the site of their murder was smeared with human faeces a few days after their deaths.

The third murder, targeting a crippled local farmer, triggered the arrest of a young Italian-speaking plasterer, Luce Nobile, who was found near the scene with bloodstains on his clothing. He was released from custody last night.

The Alto Adige, or South Tyrol, was part of Austria-Hungary until the end of the First World War, when it was given to Italy. It was dogged by ethnic tension, owing to Mussolini's aggressive attempts to Italianise it: during the 1930s there were regular terrorist attacks.

In recent decades, the nationalist sentiments of the German-speakers and the strong neo-Fascist sympathies of many local Italians have been checked by the economic benefits brought by the Alto Adige's special status as an autonomous region. However, the two communities still have little contact, and in many bars, shops and hotels, members of one or other ethnic group are banned altogether.



Cream of the crop: A Dutch crew filming 'The Milkmaid' at the opening of an exhibition of paintings by Johannes Vermeer at the Mauritshuis in The Hague. The collection of works by the artist is the largest assembled under one roof.

Photograph: Laurie Lewis

Serb charged over role in Sarajevo siege

EMMA DALY

Sarajevo

The international war-crimes tribunal in The Hague yesterday charged a Bosnian Serb general with crimes against humanity for abetting the siege of Sarajevo, which killed more than 10,000 people and wounded 50,000.

Hours after the Bosnian government declared that the blockade was over-in practice it ended in December after the arrival of Nato troops - the UN tribunal indicted Lieutenant-General Djordje Djukic.

A Yugoslav Army officer who ran the Bosnian Serbs' logistics operations.

The general was indicted for aiding and abetting the siege in which "Bosnian Serb military forces, on a widespread and systematic basis, deliberately or indiscriminately fired on civilian targets that were of no military significance in order to kill, injure, terrorise and demoralise the civilian population".



Djukic: Organised weapons

The general's lawyer, Milan Vujin, was contemptuous: "This contains one fact: that General Djukic is in the Bosnian Serb army," he said. "If that is all there is, we can get the trial over today. Yes, he's in the Bosnian Serb army. There's not one other fact here."

General Djukic fell into the hands of his alleged victims on 30 January, when his driver took a wrong turn into Sarajevo and was stopped by Bosnian

police. They arrested General Djukic and Colonel Aleksa Krstmanovic, a colleague, prompting an angry response from Bosnian Serb leaders in Pale, who severed ties with the Nato peace force (I-For).

Two weeks later, General Djukic and Colonel Krstmanovic were dispatched on a Nato plane to The Hague for investigation, to the rage - and fear - of their military and political masters. Both men refused to co-operate with the tribunal as witnesses; the Chief Prosecutor's response was to indict General Djukic and extend the colonel's detention.

"Being unable to continue to regard General Djukic as a witness we have had the opportunity of considering evidence we have against him," Judge Richard Goldstone said yesterday. "Whilst our investigations ... are not yet complete, we considered that in respect of two counts there is sufficient evidence to justify indicting General Djukic."

Most Bosnian Serbs were angered by the arrest of General Djukic, arguing that he and Colonel Krstmanovic were "backroom boys" who could not have blood on their hands.

But both had an important role in organising the weapons and ammunition for the siege, which ended formally yesterday when Bosnian police took control of the Serb-held suburb of Iljici, linking the city to government territory for the first time since May 1992.

Both men could bring down charges perhaps even President Slobodan Milosevic of Serbia. Despite the routine

denials from Belgrade, it is clear Serbia's help was crucial to the war effort of the Bosnian Serbs. General Djukic was already known to the tribunal: his name figured in evidence attached to the earlier indictments on war crimes of Radovan Karadzic and General Ratko Mladić, the political and military leaders of the Bosnian Serb forces.

General Djukic, due in court on Monday to enter a plea, is unlikely to face trial for months. The only other suspect in detention, Dusko Tadic, is expected to stand trial on 7 May, more than a year after his extradition from Germany to The Hague.

Both he and General Djukic are housed in a specially built cell-block in Scheveningen prison.

Colonel Krstmanovic will be another neighbour for at least a month, held as a possible suspect and witness. Judge Goldstone is considering whether to indict him or release him to the Bosnian authorities, who would pursue their own case against him. The colonel refused to attend earlier hearings because he does not recognise the tribunal. He may now consider the role of turncoat preferable to that of defendant.

Spanish set for life after Gonzalez

ELIZABETH NASH

Madrid

The two main candidates in Spain's general election concluded their campaigns yesterday with an appeal to uncommitted voters, possibly 20 per cent of the electorate, whose decision tomorrow could determine whether the opposition conservative Popular Party wins an absolute majority.

The PP, under Jose Maria Aznar, has campaigned for change and renewal. In its final message yesterday it insisted on the need for a changeover and promised strong, efficient government. Lifting the concept of fear from the Socialist vocabulary, he urged voters not to be afraid to opt for "the change that Spain needs".

The Prime Minister, Felipe Gonzalez, has defended what he calls the historical changes his 13-year government achieved. At the climax of a campaign marked by warnings of the return of the right, he recalled the old Republican slogan of the civil war: "No pasarán" ("They shall not pass"). The cry still stirs the heart of many Spanish progressives, though younger voters may find it mystifying.

Mr Gonzalez urged left-wingers not to waste their votes on the pro-Communist United Left, led by Julio Anguita, which, by dividing the left, amounted to a vote for the PP. In his final radio interview yesterday, Mr Gonzalez regretted corruption had damaged his government, and admitted it had wounded him. But he defended his former interior minister, Jose Barrionuevo, accused by the Supreme Court of masterminding a dirty war against ETA separatists in the 1980s.

In the closing days of the campaign each leader mobilised a claque of show-business figures. Julio Iglesias, an erstwhile Gonzalez fan, mounted the platform at a PP rally to pledge himself to the conservative cause "with my soul and with my head" and passionately kissed Mr Aznar's hand.

The Socialists won the support of the Andalucian-born Hollywood star Antonio Banderas, who sent them a video in which he says "I continue to believe in Felipe Gonzalez as a statesman".

Disneyland® Paris announces its latest attraction. The price.

TWO ADULTS
TWO CHILDREN
£79
PER PERSON
TWO NIGHTS.
TRAVEL
INCLUSIVE.

Indiana Jones™ and the Temple of Peril, Big Thunder Mountain and, of course, Space Mountain - the greatest adventure in the universe. Disneyland Paris has always had plenty of attractions for the whole family.

Even the prices are an attraction in their own right: from 10th-13th and 17th-20th March 1996, a family of four can enjoy three great days of fun and excitement for just £79* each.

This includes a return ferry crossing for one car, two nights at the Hotel Santa Fe, continental breakfast and, best of all, unlimited entry to the Park.

To book this very attractive offer, call us now on the number below.

Disneyland® PARIS
Someone you know can't wait to go.
0990 03 03 03

*Based on two adults and two children (2-11 years old) sharing a room. Offer is applicable for two-night package, staying on any day within the specified dates. Theme Park Tickets can be purchased independently from The Disney Store, Auchan, and participating agencies, at a cost of £22 per adult or £14 per child for Day passes.

To receive your free Disneyland Paris Brochure, send the completed coupon to: Disneyland Paris, FREEPOST, P.O. Box 200, Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwickshire CV37 9HY.

Name: (Mr/Mrs/Miss/Ms) _____

Home address: _____

Postcode: _____ Telephone: _____

From time to time we may wish to send you additional mailings. If you do not want to receive these, please tick this box.

Ref No. 10203

The COOPERATIVE BANK



In debt? How does 1% a month sound? (12.6% APR variable)

Get a Co-operative Bank Visa Card and you can transfer your existing balance from any other major credit card company at just 1% per month (12.6% APR variable). So, if you owe say £3,000 on a Barclays or NatWest Bank credit card you could save up to £290 over two years. More good news: we guarantee you will never,

ever be charged an annual fee for your card. Think what that could save you over a lifetime. You don't even have to bank with us. We guarantee to match the credit card limit you currently enjoy. (Our Gold Card carries a £3,000 minimum credit limit.) It's an unbeatable offer, so call us free now.

Guaranteed free for life.

Pay off your existing balance at 1% per month (12.6% APR variable).

Save up to £290 on your debts.

Keep your credit limit.

Gold Card limit £3,000.

Call free quoting reference no. 72713 or post the coupon.

Post to: Visa Card Dept., Co-operative Bank plc, FREEPOST (MRE192), Manchester M1 9AZ or phone 0800 99 5000 (24 hours a day, 7 days a week). Please use block capitals.

Full name _____ Address _____

Postcode _____ Phone number _____

Please tick card interested in: Visa Card Gold Visa Card

72713

THE BANK HAS DECLINANT APPLICATION FACILITIES ARE SUBJECT TO STATUS AND NOT AVAILABLE TO MINORS. CUSTOMERS MUST USE THE CARD AT LEAST 10 TIMES PER YEAR. QUOTATIONS ARE AVAILABLE ON REQUEST. THE CARD IS SUBJECT TO A TRANSFER BALANCE OF £100. THE BALANCE IS REPAYED IN FULL OVER A PERIOD OF 24 MONTHS. PAYMENTS ARE MADE AT 2.5% INTEREST. CO-OPERATIVE BANK CARDS AT 12.6% APR WOULD COST £14. ALL RATES CORRECT AS AT 11.1.96.

0800 99 5000



Spaniard set for life after Gonzalez



Relatives being comforted at Lima airport, Peru, after learning that there were no survivors when a Pan American flight with 123 people on board crashed in an Andean mountain canyon on Thursday. Photograph: AP

Jet speedometer blamed for crash

PHIL DAVISON
Latin America Correspondent

A speedometer which told the pilots they were flying faster than they really were caused last month's crash of an aircraft full of German tourists off the Dominican Republic, it emerged yesterday.

Initial reports from the United States National Transportation Safety Board (NTSB), released by Dominican Republic officials, suggested the velocity indicator on the Turkish-owned Birgenair Boeing 757 had been reading 335 knots (about 370 mph) as the jet reached 7,000 feet shortly after take-off from the resort of Puerto Plata on 6 February.

In fact, it was flying at a much lower speed, the engines stalled and the aircraft went into a dive, plunging into the Atlantic Ocean and killing all 189 people on board.

An article in yesterday's *Washington Post* said there were indications the Turkish flight crew had known before take-off that there were problems with its velocity instruments but decided to go ahead with the flight, returning German tourists to Berlin and Frankfurt. There was no immediate comment from the airline.

The 757, leased for the flight by Birgenair to its local affiliate, Alas Nacionales, had been idle at Puerto Plata for at least two weeks, raising concerns at the time that its maintenance may not have been up to scratch. It was pressed into service at the last minute to replace a Boeing

767 which Alas Nacionales was scheduled to use. Some officials at the time said the 767 had had problems with its hydraulics. Others said the airline had opted for the smaller 757 because the flight was considerably underbooked.

There was no immediate response from the Boeing company in Seattle, Washington, which lost its first 757 on 20 December when an American Airlines flight from Miami hit a mountain in Cali, Colombia, killing all but four of the 164 on board. Pilot error or a misunderstanding with the Cali control tower have been provisionally blamed for that crash.

General Hector Roman Torres, the Dominican Republic's head of civil aviation, told the Associated Press that the NTSB had reached its conclusion after studying the flight recorders recovered from the seabed last week by a US Navy guided robot. "An alarm went off indicating that the aeroplane was losing a lot of velocity, and 84 seconds later the aeroplane hit the water," he said.

The US banned all Dominican Republic airlines from landing in the US three years ago, saying its civil aviation authority was not up to international standards. Before the crash occurred, the Dominicans had hoped to overturn the ban. But Germany, too, said this week it wanted a European Union "black list" of countries with low air-safety standards following the Dominican crash, vowing to go it alone if necessary.

Get the Independent on Sunday for only 50p
See page 2 for voucher

Starting tomorrow in the Independent on Sunday

FO Dream Team
INDEPENDENT

Play Formula 1 Dream Team
Win a drive in a Grand Prix car

Plus in the Independent on Monday

FREE
F1 Racing Magazine

5000

INDEPENDENT ON SUNDAY

international

US to guard Cuban exiles' ocean protest

PHIL DAVISON
Miami

US Coast Guard vessels and aircraft will attempt to keep the peace today as Cuban-Americans sail and fly from Miami in a protest-cum-memorial demonstration to within 20 miles of the Cuban coast. The exiles plan to lay wreaths and cross into the Straits of Florida in the area where four exiles were shot down in two small planes by Cuban MiG fighters a week earlier.

With relations between Bill Clinton and Fidel Castro at their lowest point to date, the President's order for a heavy Coast Guard escort - with Air Force fighters and naval vessels on standby in Florida and the Caribbean - appeared aimed as much at keeping the exiles in check as protecting them from any further Cuban attack.

The US warned the exiles ex- pected to sail in up to 40 private boats with two light aircraft overhead, that they would face civil and criminal penalties if they tried to provoke Mr Castro by pushing ahead into Cuba's 12-mile territorial waters. The organisers have promised not to but there were some fears here last night that the most radical anti-Castro activists may break ranks.

Some moderate exiles expressed fears that any unforeseen incident could create confusion in the US response and suck in the US military forces on stand-by.

The White House press spokesman, Mike McCurry, said the US had warned Cuban officials not to interfere with the flotilla. "In plain English, the United States of America will not tolerate unacceptable behaviour by the Cuban government," he said, a phrase seen by some as almost dangerously

vague in the event that anything unforeseen occurs.

Mr McCurry said Mr Clinton supported the idea of a memorial service at sea to the four victims from the Miami-based Brothers to the Rescue. The group flies the Straits of Florida looking for Cuban boat people

but has also made at least two flights over Havana to drop pro-democracy leaflets.

Cuba's Foreign Minister, Roberto Roa, said Cuba

will take no action provided the flotilla and planes stayed outside the island's territorial waters. That, however, raised the question of definition. Cuba said its MiGs shot the two planes down in its waters, though US radar tracking showed they were outside the 12-mile limit, 17 and 25 miles respectively. Cuba apparently acted because a third plane had entered the 12-mile limit or because all three were south of the 24th parallel, about 40 miles north of Cuba, recognised even by the US as the island's Air Defense Identification Zone.

A dozen Coast Guard cutters will accompany the flotilla, backed by two unarmed Coast Guard C-130 planes.

Meanwhile, Canada slammed Mr Clinton for backing anti-Castro legislation that could affect countries such as Canada, Britain and Spain, which do business with Cuba. The Canadian Trade Minister, Art Eggleton, said he would meet US officials in Washington tomorrow to argue that the so-called Helms-Burton bill violates international law and the North American Free Trade Agreement. He said Canada may take the US to the international court in The Hague. The bill would mean Cuban exiles could sue in US courts for the return of property they owned before Mr Castro's 1959 revolution.



beyond the conventional

Big on safety. ABS brakes. Driver's airbag.

Saab Safeseat. Side impact protection.

Power Steering. A big engine.

Twin-cam 16 valve, 2.0 litre, 130 bhp.

Big on boot space. Capacity 46.3 cu ft.

3 year/60,000 mile warranty.

Extended service intervals.

A.B.I. Advisory Group 10 insurance rating.

SAAB 900

£14,995

The price quoted is the maximum price you'll pay and is correct at the time of going to press.

It includes delivery, road tax and plates.

CALL 0800 626 556 FOR A TEST DRIVE.

Big benefits. Compact price. No small print.



To Saab Information Centre, Freepost WC4524, London WC2E 7BR. Please send further information on the: 900 9000 CD (Saloon) 9000 CS (Sedan)

Name _____ Address _____ REF 2517

Present car make & model _____ Year of reg. _____ Age if under 18 _____ Attach your business card or phone 0800 636556 or fax 0171 240 6033.

ESTATE

international

Court forces Dole to fight for New York

DAVID USBORNE
New York

It was meant to be the state that was locked up for Bob Dole; not so any more. Less than a week before the Republicans in New York get their say about who should be their nominee for the 1996 presidential election, the courts have decided that the party's efforts to keep it a one-man derby are unfair.

The intervention this week by a US appeals court means that New York, which will account for more than 10 per cent of the delegates at the party convention in August, is about to have its first contested Republican primary in its history. Suddenly, next Thursday's vote is vitally important.

The court declared unconstitutional party rules that restrict the ability of candidates to get on to the ballot in the state's 31 electoral districts. Forced to collect more than

THE US
PRESIDENTIAL
ELECTIONS '96

1,000 signatures from registered Republicans in each district, candidates had little chance of qualifying without the blessing of the party apparatus.

Doing the amending has been Republican US Senator Alfonse D'Amato and his choice has always been Mr Dole. Until now, in what to most observers seemed like a perversion of democracy, there was little question but that Mr Dole would simply be handed the state.

Now Mr Dole will have to face competition from Pat Buchanan in about 18 of the districts and, more importantly, from Steve Forbes, whose name will appear on ballots in all of them. State-wide, the New York primary has been transformed

into a critical head-to-head between Mr Forbes and Mr Dole. Notorious for its unpredictable in elections, the state appears to be tilting marginally towards Mr Dole. The latest poll, published by the New York Post, showed Mr Dole leading Mr Forbes by 31 per cent to 27 per cent. Mr Buchanan was trailing with 16 per cent.

Whereas until just days ago, New York could have counted on being largely ignored by the candidates, the state now is preparing for a campaign blitz. For Mr Dole, who is just showing signs of recovering some balance in the race, this is bad news. He will be forced to spend time and money – which he has in dwindling supply – on the state when he had thought it was not going to be necessary.

It also means that the rich bag of delegates cannot be all his. New York is not a winner-takes-all state, so even if Mr



Sounding off: Mr Forbes with the media in South Carolina, a vital state for Republican hopefuls

Photograph: AP

Buchanan set for fresh defeat

RUPERT CORNWELL
Charleston, South Carolina

Senator Bob Dole is favourite to fend off Pat Buchanan's challenge and win today's pivotal Republican primary in South Carolina, whose importance in the race for the nomination extends well beyond the 37 delegates the state will send to this summer's convention in San Diego.

On the eve of voting, polls put Mr Dole clearly ahead of the former Reagan speech-writer and conservative commentator, suggesting a strong Dole organisation here and the support of the Republican hierarchy may outweigh Mr Buchanan's appeal to the Christian right and blue-collar workers fearful for their jobs.

Predictably it was Mr Buchanan, with his denunciation of abortion and moral decay, who drew the loudest cheers of the four major candidates at a Christian-coalition rally on Thursday. But Mr Dole avoided disaster, as he did earlier in the day at a televised candidates' debate mainly notable for vicious exchanges between the two lesser contenders here, the publisher Steve Forbes and Lamar Alexander, an ex-governor of Tennessee.

For Mr Dole and Mr Alexander especially, the stakes here are enormous. With his campaign close to the maximum permitted federal-spending ceiling, the Senate majority leader must secure a victory if he is to break clear in New England, New York, and the rest of the South, which hold their own primaries over the next 10 days.

Anything less than a second place here and victory in Georgia on Tuesday would surely doom Mr Alexander, who has yet to win a primary and will run out of money if potential financial backers lose faith. Yet he appears to be running no better than third, and could be out of the contest after "Super Tuesday" on 12 March.

No such worries bother Mr Forbes, who has indicated he will continue right through. Since he is spending his own money, he is not affected by the \$37m (£23.6m) limit that may soon hobble Mr Dole's media efforts in major states like New York, Florida and Texas which lie immediately ahead and especially California on 26 March, if the race is not settled by then.

Also this weekend Wyoming is holding caucuses to select the 12 delegates it will send to San Diego.

Again Mr Dole is favourite but Mr Forbes could make a showing in this traditionally anti-government and libertarian Western state.

IN BRIEF

China forces UN to cut Haiti mission

New York — Brandishing its veto power, China forced the United States and its allies to scale back the UN mission in Haiti and shorten its mandate. Peking told the Haiti operation hostage for several days, threatening to veto a draft resolution unless the UN Security Council acceded to its demands. A negative vote by China would kill the resolution. Diplomats said the subtlety was Peking's anger at both Haiti and the US for positive overtures to Taiwan, which it considers a renegade province.

Reuters

Croatian murderer extradited

Zagreb — A Croat convicted of a murder that helped touch off the Serb-Croat war in eastern Croatia in 1991 has been extradited to Croatia from Germany. Ante Gudelj, 48, was sentenced in 1994 in absentia to 20 years in prison – the maximum penalty under Croatian law – for killing Josip Rebil-Kir, a police official in eastern Croatia, and two of his associates.

AP

Moi meets opposition leaders

Nairobi — For the first time since political pluralism was restored in Kenya five years ago, President Daniel arap Moi met three opposition leaders yesterday. Chairmen Mwai Kibaki of the Democratic Party and Michael Kijana Wamalwa of Ford-Kenya and Martin Shikuku, secretary-general of Ford-Ash, said Mr Moi called the meeting.

AP

Women back gay cleric in Cyprus

Nicosia — Women from Morphou district in north-western Cyprus picketed the island's archbishopric in Nicosia yesterday, demanding the church lift sanctions on a cleric barred from being a candidate for bishop because of alleged homosexual activities. The Cyprus Orthodox Church has refused to lift Archimandrite Panagiotis Meraklis as a candidate in the elections.

Reuters

EVERY READER

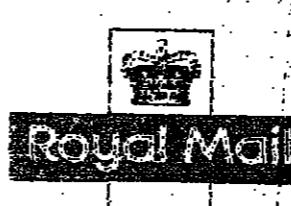
There are many occasions when you'll need a stamp, and we have a stamp book for all of them. Available at over 80,000 post offices and shops nationwide, stamp books are the convenient way to buy stamps. Plus, they save you time because you won't have to make a special

journey when you need them. The cover protects your stamps from being damaged and reduces your chance of losing them.

With so many different stamp books to choose from, you're spoilt for choice.



The Official Sponsor of both the British Olympic and Paralympic Teams



UNSECURED PERSONAL LOANS
13.8% APR* available on loans from £7,000 to £10,000. 16.5% APR* available on loans from £100 to £1,000. Loans for business or charitable purposes are excluded.
*APR = Annual Percentage Rate. A full explanation of our credit terms is available on request. All loans are repayable in 12 monthly instalments over a period of 12 months.
For your security and to improve our service to you, we may record or monitor your calls.

0800 30 3000

Hamilton Direct Bank
Hamilton Direct Bank Ltd, a subsidiary of HNC Bank plc, an authorised institution.
Under the Banking Act 1987. Registered Office: 10th Floor, One Newgate Street, London EC1A 7AA. Registered No. 514 4172. Registered in England No. 1117795.

مكتابات الاموال

The American airman, his Russian wife, her lover the British diplomat, their plan to make millions and the story scandalising Brussels

Sitting in Rick's Café, his favourite Brussels haunt, Marshall Michel adjusts his tie-pin and confesses that he would have his Russian wife, Elena, back "in a second" despite it all. He isn't surprised that Michael Emerson, the European Union's former ambassador to Moscow, should have fallen for her, or that he had been tempted by the lure of making "big bucks" in Russia.

"She's real special," Michel says, in his Louisiana drawl. "But I've been bombed out by the whole damn business." A US fighter pilot during the Vietnam war, he has been through tough times before. But finding those documents has been "something else". The computer files that Michel is referring to are at the heart of a story that has scandalised normally sedate Brussels and cast a shadow over the cleanest than clean image of normally staid European Union officials. "I mean," he adds, with an unsettling stare, "if an American diplomat had done this it would have been 'good-night'."

Meanwhile, in the Minsk Tavern, on Brussels' Chausse de Charleroi, Michael Emerson, the European Union's former ambassador to Moscow, and Elena Prokhorova, his 40-year-old Russian lover and Michel's wife, are also taking stock. "I feel I've been watching a film – a nightmare. It hasn't really been about me," says Elena. Mr Emerson is not talking. He is said to be in "bad shape". His deserted historian wife, Barbara (they met as undergraduates at Oxford and married in 1966), spoke chipperly yesterday of "poor

"straight-talking kind of guy",

returned to his Brussels home distraught in the knowledge that his new Russian wife – the tall, slender, dark and highly intelligent Elena Prokhorova – had left him for another man, Michael Emerson.

Mr Michel first met Ms Prokhorova in 1991 while he was working as a US air-force planner at Nato in Brussels. She then went to work as a translator with the European Commission in Moscow, but the couple kept in touch, and married in August last year, when Ms Prokhorova returned to Brussels to live with Mr Michel. She was used to moving in high diplomatic circles. She had previously been married to the Russian ambassador to the Council of Europe. Her impressive curriculum vitae (take one entry: 1977-1979 – translator, India – USSR State Committee for External Economic Relations) has caused much comment among old Soviet hands, who know how translators were once used by the KGB.

Mr Michel learned that his wife was leaving him by fax. "She faxed me a Dear John letter when I was away in Washington. Can you believe it?" he asks, evidently still distressed. In the fax she disclosed she had been having an affair with Mr Emerson while they were both working in Moscow. Mr Emerson had returned to Brussels in January after a four-year stint. Once he was reunited with his lover, he left his wife of almost 30 years, with whom he had three children. On returning to his empty home, Mr Michel realised the couple had been

By Sarah Helm

together in his house and he had reason to believe they had used his computer. A computer whiz, he found several files that they thought they had "trashed" – but hadn't.

Among these files were a series of letters, some in Russian, written to contacts in Moscow, discussing plans to set up a "consultancy company". The couple's main contact was a St Petersburg businessman called Ilya Baskin. Elena says she introduced Mr Emerson to Mr Baskin. The letters discussed setting up business deals in Central Asia and Kirghizia, and referred to the fact that European Union funding for Russia, known as the TACIS programme, was about to be extended to these areas, which meant it was a "good time" to do business. It is not clear what consultancy services the business would have been offering other than explaining how Western and Russian companies might benefit from EU aid.

Another letter, written by Mr Emerson, was addressed to Stuart Naunton, a tax expert at Coopers and Lybrand, in Moscow. This letter advised Mr Naunton to expect contact with Mr Baskin and told him to arrange for money to reach a series of offshore bank accounts. The most devastating discovery, made by Michel, was a further document describing the plan for the proposed company, as well as the "working conditions" and monthly remuneration of the president. In

addition to a salary and lump sum under this proposal, Mr Emerson would have had a flat or house in Moscow with reliable security, as well as a car, a secretary and several other fringe benefits.

Mr Michel said this week: "I realised when I read that document that this was no love story. I was up against \$1.1 million as well."

Neither Mr Emerson or Ms Prokhorova dispute the authenticity of the documents, but both deny any wrongdoing. They simply say they had "plans" to set up the company, insisting no money had changed hands. Armed with the evidence he had accumulated, the American acted quickly, immediately alerting the European Commission fraud watchdogs and the Belgian Police.

The European Commission, which likes to paint its own staff as whiter than white, appeared somewhat dumfounded by Mr Michel's bombshell, but agreed to launch an internal inquiry. They could hardly ignore the evidence which the American had given to them by handing over his computer. "They had 300 megabytes to look through," he says. "Imagine, I gave them everything on that machine – the first draft of my first novel. Can you imagine how embarrassing that was?"

If true, the Commission knew that the allegations against Mr Emerson clearly pointed to a serious case of conflict of interest – or worse. But this US-style whistleblowing had sent the Brussels Eurocrats scrambling for cover. As the allegations began to emerge, officials at first huffed and puffed. "It can't be true," they shrugged. "Not Emerson! He doesn't have it in him." Educated at Hurst Pierpoint public school in Sussex, and Balliol College, Oxford, Mr Emerson's reputation appeared to be clean. "Bright but humourless," was how some colleagues described him. He had worked for the Commission since 1973, and had even been an economic advisor to Roy Jenkins when he was the EU President.

Even Mr Emerson's wife, Barbara, seemed flabbergasted.

"Michael is very clever, but he can't do anything on his own," she said. "He is good at the world economy but when it comes to paying the bills, I have to do it or the electricity would be cut off." Meanwhile, the Foreign Office in London were quick to let it be known that Mr Emerson was not a "British diplomat". He was, strictly speaking, an EU official, and as such, certainly not one of theirs.

By the beginning of this week, it was apparent that the Commission fraud inquiry had established that the evidence produced by Mr Michel was genuine. The question remained: what to do? On Wednesday a somewhat shamefaced spokesman, Nicholas van de Pas, took to the Commission press podium to say that the former ambassador had been granted "early retirement". Mr Emerson's behaviour, conceded the spokesman, had been "deplorable", but there was no cause for disciplinary action.

The story may, nevertheless, not be quite over. The Commission inquiry is still going on and officials are believed to be still hunting down the mysterious Mr Baskin, somewhere in St Petersburg.

Ms Prokhorova said yesterday that she and Michael Emerson, who are living together in a rented Brussels flat, were working on new plans. She said she was bitter about being described as a "Russian temptress" and rejected claims that she had been connected with the KGB or Russian Mafia. She would not comment on whether she and Mr Emerson intended to pursue plans to set up a business in Moscow. "We would love to get married as soon as possible," she said. "The idea of the company only had a 50-50 chance of coming off. Perhaps we will go to New Zealand and grow cabbages."

Yesterday, the heroine of the story, Barbara Emerson, visited the Commission to see if she might qualify for a slice of Mr Emerson's pension. The couple have three children. "I am of a practical disposition," she said bravely. "Poor Michael, I think he will come back to me in the end. He only used to eat packet soup when I wasn't there."

Mr Michel admits that he doesn't really expect Elena to come back to him but he is sure that "she will cheat on Emerson soon". He says he is staying on in Brussels and is planning his next book – and rumour has it, could be a novel about an American, his wife and her diplomat lover, based in Moscow and Brussels.

Brays should look on the bright side.

At least pot-bellied pigs can bark.

And don't bother to write in and call me one. I'm sure the Sun's Garry Bushell will do it for you.

I'm glad that 29 February only comes

round every four years, or we'd have a glut of weather women and local news

presenters proposing to their men

live on air. It is irritating, too,

because we never get to see the men

weeping, or running screaming from

the studio with a look of terror on

their faces.

I didn't propose to anyone, just in case they said yes. Having a husband would ruin my reputation as the man-hating feminist ballbreaker that I am.

Stuart Sutcliffe, one of the original Beatles, who died tragically young from a stroke, I didn't attend the auction as I

couldn't bear the potential humiliation

of only attracting a sum under a tenner,

from one of my relatives. However, two

blokes bid a flattering and sizeable

sum. As I went to meet them, all I

knew was that they were in

"advertising", and I confess my

prejudices had made me apprehensive.

Yes, I'm afraid I imagined two braying,

suited whizzkids with whom I would

have nothing in common. I apologise.

I was completely wrong. They were

intelligent, interesting men with a great

sense of humour and I hope they

enjoyed it. I did, especially the scenes.

It's a shame that the two women in

the Peugeot advert haven't been

apprehended yet and tried in the very

irritating ads court. They didn't drive

over a cliff either, more's the pity.

Many rich upper-class women, the

Princess of Wales included, seem hell-

bent on doing good works for charity

groups. Why? Is it down to conscience,

guilt, frustration or a wish for self-

fulfilment? I would imagine much of it

may be down to boredom. A visit to

the homeless or a chat with the

royals? No contest in my book.

I got into a taxi this week and said

some words that I will probably never

say again: "The Ritz, please." This was

because I'd put myself and a free tea at

the Ritz up for auction on behalf of an

arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

the arts foundation set up in the name of

Why our innermost thoughts need protection

This week we were subjected to another outburst of intimacy from the Princess of Wales. Apparently she is frustrated by the Royal Family's reaction to her demands in her divorce negotiations, and she thinks they are playing ping-pong with her – whatever that means. We've heard a lot about Diana's innermost thoughts in the past few years, from bulimia to the enemy camp Buckingham Palace, from her desire to be Queen of Hearts to her distress at the stream of battered this and battered that, which made up royal life. The collapse of the British monarchy under the weight of its many failed relationships is an important cultural and constitutional story of our times.

It also happens to be jolly good fun, for newspapers and their readers. As far as the royal mismarriage is concerned we need have few qualms about prying hacks invading people's privacy and telling their story to the world. The leading protagonists have been tripping over each other to spill their beans to a waiting world.

Why shouldn't we want to know and expect to be told as much as we can stomach about the inner details of the Wales's miserable marriage? After all, we are at the end of a week that has been dominated by the need to make British society more open. This newspaper, more than any other, has campaigned for greater openness in every walk of life. We welcomed Sir Richard Scott's arms-to-Iraq report two weeks ago, with its damning evidence of insidious secrecy in the corridors of power. We called for greater transparency, greater accountability and for a Freedom of Information Act. What's sauce for the Gov-

ernment should presumably be sauce for the Crown too. As long as the machinations of the Royal Family have constitutional implications they are fair game for public scrutiny.

However, as we lap it up, there is something that vaguely worries us about the Royals' enthusiasm for letting it all hang out. Their case is just the most extreme of the rise of public confessionalism, using the television screen as the latter day equivalent of the church as the medium for atoning. The case for greater openness in a system of government as closed as the one we have is overwhelming. A society is being driven to be more open by a set of linked forces. Democracy demands openness. Technologies, such as the spread of the personal computer and the Internet are allowing more information to be made available more rapidly to more people. A society like ours, which believes in the market and meritocracy, has to be open about the rules of competition and the standards against which people are being judged.

And yet in this urge to be open are there no costs? Is openness an unalloyed good or is possible that this Nineties fashion for confessionalism and disclosure could, taken to the extreme, undermine the very notion of what should be kept private?

Take confessionalism first. Charles and Diana compete for media space with the famous fortune and the downright ordinary to reveal deep secrets to a national audience. Soap opera stars describe how they have overcome drug addictions. Families admit to their squabbles and their deepest anxieties on *Oprah* and her UK equivalent.



lents. Cilla Black drags millions of viewers away from the *National Lottery Show* every Saturday night to watch strangers meet, date and describe what they like and dislike about one another on *Blind Date*.

If tabloid television doesn't tickle your fancy there are the more gentle versions on Radio 4. Listeners can enjoy highly personal reflections on *Desert Island Discs* or *In The Psychiatrist's Chair*. Every weekend acres of newsprint are taken up with first person columns in which the authors turn their experiences into marketable commodities of the media age.

And then there are the books: Nick Hornby confessing his addiction to football, Giles Smith detailing his obsession with *Sting*, Blake Morrison picking over his life with his father and this week Madame Mitterrand's revelations about loving a man who seduced a young woman to a past life with the late French President and includes stories she never shared with her husband was alive.

All this effusive openness has huge advantages. Many forms of therapy – overcoming drug and alcohol addictions, dealing with experiences of rape or child abuse, attending a violent past, or even marriage counselling – involve describing personal experiences and emotions to others. People often find it cathartic and constructive. Watching others admit to illness or emotional problems on television can be extremely reassuring for people – especially men – who would otherwise agonise about the same issues in isolation.

But all this revealing can go too far. Milan Kundera, writing in the *New York Review of Books* last

year and recalling his experience of the way totalitarianism has destroyed private life in eastern Europe, argued that maintaining a private world is essential to sustaining a sense of the individual: "Private and public are two essentially different worlds and respect for that difference is the indispensable condition for a man to live free." The thoughts and reactions we admit to in our heads are very different from the scribblings in a diary for publication. If our private thoughts become crowded out by the need to marshal and reveal an opinion for public view, then we may lose any sense of a private self.

Kundera fears that the sanctity of private life is once again being threatened in the liberal democracies of the 1990s. This time, it is the appetite for displaying the private world for the entertainment of the public.

Certainly relationships suffer from too much public show. Building close bonds with other people depends on being able to single them out for a distinctive form of communication. Lovers become intimate only because they admit each other to a private and privileged world. It is hardly surprising that in the past 12 months a string of so-called celebrity marriages have broken down. The requirements of intimacy for a relationship incompatible if it would seem with the demands of a public role.

Openness is a great good. We do not have enough of it in our political and corporate life, where too often secrecy is the *modus vivendi*. Yet openness in the name of the public only makes sense if there is also a private world to be protected and nurtured. We neglect that at our peril.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Medical negligence: to apologise, to explain, to litigate

From Dr Michael Saunders
Sir: I read with interest Polly Toynbee's article "Legal leeches are bleeding the NHS" (2 February). The Medical Defence Union is contributing to Lord Woolf's review of civil justice and supports any initiatives to make the litigation process fairer, faster and cheaper in the interests of our members and their patients.

I would, however, like to take issue with the common misunderstanding, repeated in the article, that "no prudent manager or medical 'insurer' would dream of letting a doctor apologise". This is certainly not our view, and we speak as the UK's leading provider of indemnity to doctors.

Since the mid-1980s, we have repeatedly advised our members to "say sorry" if something has gone wrong with a patient's treatment. A sincere and honest apology should be made, either by the doctor concerned or, if appropriate, by a senior col-

league. Doctors should not worry about inadvertently making an admission of legal liability, as this is something completely different. The patient is always entitled to a prompt, appropriate and truthful account of what has occurred. Yours faithfully,

MICHAEL SAUNDERS
Chief Executive
Medical Defence Union
London, W1

From Professor Roy Sanders
Sir: Polly Toynbee has hit the nail on the head. Screw the NHS by making litigation for medical negligence cheaper and quicker, and justice more accessible, and money will be diverted from medicine to the law; from patients in need of treatment to those who have been negligently treated.

Some "Trusts" hammer the doctor by settling actions because it is cheaper than defending them. Where does that leave the doctor faced with

a well-treated but discontented and litigious patient?

Chip away at the trust a patient has in the doctor, wedge the lawyers between the human and apologetic doctor and the patient, and it is plain to see that with increased access to litigation, for the NHS, there's a Woolf at the door.

Yours faithfully,
ROY SANDERS
Clinical Director
Centre for Plastic and
Reconstructive Surgery
Mount Vernon Hospital
Northwood

From Mr Michael Napier
Sir: The tranquilliser claims Polly Toynbee refers to are against pharmaceutical companies for failing to warn doctors and patients about the risk of injury to health, caused by addiction and dependency on drugs, at vast expense to the NHS. Soon after the claims were made, a government warning led to a dramatic

reduction in tranquilliser prescriptions at a huge saving to the NHS. And although the liability of the drug manufacturers was never tested at trial, the case was certainly not the hooper she suggests.

In her sweeping attack on the legal profession's motives when acting for accident victims, Polly Toynbee also overlooks the fact that nobody can sue for medical negligence (with or without legal aid) unless their claim is supported by the independent evidence of another doctor.

Medical negligence litigation is usually hard fought and not every case succeeds. But each year, numerous victims of medical accidents rightly recover compensation that in total far exceeds the annual amount paid out by legal aid on cases that fail.

Yours faithfully,
MICHAEL NAPIER
President, Association of
Personal Injury Lawyers
Nottingham

From Mr Michael Napier
Sir: The tranquilliser claims Polly Toynbee refers to are against pharmaceutical companies for failing to warn doctors and patients about the risk of injury to health, caused by addiction and dependency on drugs, at vast expense to the NHS. Soon after the claims were made, a government warning led to a dramatic

reduction in tranquilliser prescriptions at a huge saving to the NHS. And although the liability of the drug manufacturers was never tested at trial, the case was certainly not the hooper she suggests.

Civil Service recruitment

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan

to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well thought out? Assurances that civil servants will

retain control over tests for appointments to "the fast-stream" and that audits could lead to a sub-standard RAS losing the contract may allay some anxieties, but the likely outcome seems to be a complicated system involving extra work rather than savings.

In my experience, based on my time in the Diplomatic Service and later as an assessor for the Civil Service Selection Board, our recruitment system has a justifiably high reputation at home and abroad for its integrity and effective assessment methods. Indeed the Government has advanced no specific criticism of the RAS, so why dismantle it?

GILLIAN BROWN,
London, W8

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well thought out? Assurances that civil servants will

retain control over tests for appointments to "the fast-stream" and that audits could lead to a sub-standard RAS losing the contract may allay some anxieties, but the likely outcome seems to be a complicated system involving extra work rather than savings.

In my experience, based on my time in the Diplomatic Service and later as an assessor for the Civil Service Selection Board, our recruitment system has a justifiably high reputation at home and abroad for its integrity and effective assessment methods. Indeed the Government has advanced no specific criticism of the RAS, so why dismantle it?

GILLIAN BROWN,
London, W8

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well thought out? Assurances that civil servants will

retain control over tests for appointments to "the fast-stream" and that audits could lead to a sub-standard RAS losing the contract may allay some anxieties, but the likely outcome seems to be a complicated system involving extra work rather than savings.

In my experience, based on my time in the Diplomatic Service and later as an assessor for the Civil Service Selection Board, our recruitment system has a justifiably high reputation at home and abroad for its integrity and effective assessment methods. Indeed the Government has advanced no specific criticism of the RAS, so why dismantle it?

GILLIAN BROWN,
London, W8

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well thought out? Assurances that civil servants will

retain control over tests for appointments to "the fast-stream" and that audits could lead to a sub-standard RAS losing the contract may allay some anxieties, but the likely outcome seems to be a complicated system involving extra work rather than savings.

In my experience, based on my time in the Diplomatic Service and later as an assessor for the Civil Service Selection Board, our recruitment system has a justifiably high reputation at home and abroad for its integrity and effective assessment methods. Indeed the Government has advanced no specific criticism of the RAS, so why dismantle it?

GILLIAN BROWN,
London, W8

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well thought out? Assurances that civil servants will

retain control over tests for appointments to "the fast-stream" and that audits could lead to a sub-standard RAS losing the contract may allay some anxieties, but the likely outcome seems to be a complicated system involving extra work rather than savings.

In my experience, based on my time in the Diplomatic Service and later as an assessor for the Civil Service Selection Board, our recruitment system has a justifiably high reputation at home and abroad for its integrity and effective assessment methods. Indeed the Government has advanced no specific criticism of the RAS, so why dismantle it?

GILLIAN BROWN,
London, W8

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well thought out? Assurances that civil servants will

retain control over tests for appointments to "the fast-stream" and that audits could lead to a sub-standard RAS losing the contract may allay some anxieties, but the likely outcome seems to be a complicated system involving extra work rather than savings.

In my experience, based on my time in the Diplomatic Service and later as an assessor for the Civil Service Selection Board, our recruitment system has a justifiably high reputation at home and abroad for its integrity and effective assessment methods. Indeed the Government has advanced no specific criticism of the RAS, so why dismantle it?

GILLIAN BROWN,
London, W8

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well thought out? Assurances that civil servants will

retain control over tests for appointments to "the fast-stream" and that audits could lead to a sub-standard RAS losing the contract may allay some anxieties, but the likely outcome seems to be a complicated system involving extra work rather than savings.

In my experience, based on my time in the Diplomatic Service and later as an assessor for the Civil Service Selection Board, our recruitment system has a justifiably high reputation at home and abroad for its integrity and effective assessment methods. Indeed the Government has advanced no specific criticism of the RAS, so why dismantle it?

GILLIAN BROWN,
London, W8

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well thought out? Assurances that civil servants will

retain control over tests for appointments to "the fast-stream" and that audits could lead to a sub-standard RAS losing the contract may allay some anxieties, but the likely outcome seems to be a complicated system involving extra work rather than savings.

In my experience, based on my time in the Diplomatic Service and later as an assessor for the Civil Service Selection Board, our recruitment system has a justifiably high reputation at home and abroad for its integrity and effective assessment methods. Indeed the Government has advanced no specific criticism of the RAS, so why dismantle it?

GILLIAN BROWN,
London, W8

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well thought out? Assurances that civil servants will

retain control over tests for appointments to "the fast-stream" and that audits could lead to a sub-standard RAS losing the contract may allay some anxieties, but the likely outcome seems to be a complicated system involving extra work rather than savings.

In my experience, based on my time in the Diplomatic Service and later as an assessor for the Civil Service Selection Board, our recruitment system has a justifiably high reputation at home and abroad for its integrity and effective assessment methods. Indeed the Government has advanced no specific criticism of the RAS, so why dismantle it?

GILLIAN BROWN,
London, W8

From Dame Gillian Brown
Sir: The Government's plan to privatise the Civil Service Recruitment and Advisory Service has had scant publicity, but as a result of questions in the House of Lords it will be debated there on 8 March. I hope the Government will be persuaded to drop the scheme.

The advantages of privatisation for undertakings needing major investment and competition scarcely apply. Earl Home stated on 25 January that it would free the RAS to compete for business in a wider market. Is that realistic given the multitude of existing agencies? A stated purpose is to provide a better service with better value for the taxpayer. Is that well

tection



The Fifties

Michael Bracewell on the
lost decade, page 7

THIS WEEKEND WHY NOT...

WALLOW In Wagner

Throw yourself in at deep end and take part in London's mini-Wagner festival: ENO's *Tristan and Isolde* (4pm today) has garnered reviews you couldn't pay for, and Anne Evans is the undoubtedly star of the Royal Opera's *Gotterdämmerung* (4.30pm today). Queue early for day seats or join the returns queue.

■ ENO (0171-632 8300); Royal Opera House (0171-304 4000)

READ The Whitbread Book of the Year

Remember when Jeanette Winterson was funny? Kate Atkinson has all that and no pretentiousness to boot. Glory in *Behind the Scenes at the Museum*, the tale of Nelly and Bumby, her sublimely grumpy mother. Anyone blanching at the cost of hardback fiction will be delighted to discover that the Whitbread Book of the Year is now in paperback.

■ Black Swan, £6.99

DISCOVER Bedpan Art

Despised by traditionalists and ignored by the avant-garde, the bedpan remains a spectacularly unexplored resource in world art. Until now. A new exhibition brings together sculptures – including masks and a horse – all made from disposable pans. Will Bran Sewell be there?

■ Science Museum, London SW7 (0171-938 8000) 10am-6pm; £5 adults, £2.60 concs

EAT At Martha's Vineyard

The *Independent's* Restaurant of the Year is outside Colchester and not, as its name suggests, in America. Fresh, local ingredients are combined with a sure touch to produce such delights as roast tomato soup, a warm salad of herring-roe and excellent poultry.

■ 18 High Street, Nayland, Suffolk. Sat, lunch & dinner; Sun, lunch; £25-£30 approx incl. wine

WATCH The Birdies

Woody Allen described pigeons as "rats with wings", but there's more to ornithology than cheap abuse. If your list of bird breeds runs out after robins and sparrows, try visiting the Wildfowl and Wetlands Trust. Each Sunday there are guided walks around the 60-acre site, home to 63 species of birds.

■ Mill Road, Arundel, W Sussex (01903 883355) 9.30am-4.30pm; talks 1.30pm

PICTURE STORY 2
INTERVIEW 3
SHOPPING 4-5

ARTS 6-7
BOOKS 8-11
GARDENING 12

COUNTRY 13
TRAVEL 14-19
MOTORING 20

PROPERTY 21
MONEY 22-25
GOING OUT 26

TV & RADIO 28
TODAY 28
SUNDAY 27

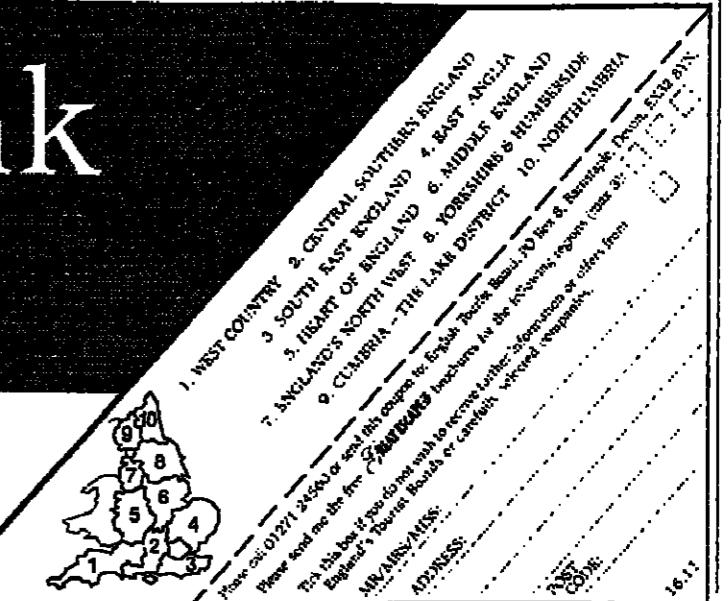


Lie back and think of England.

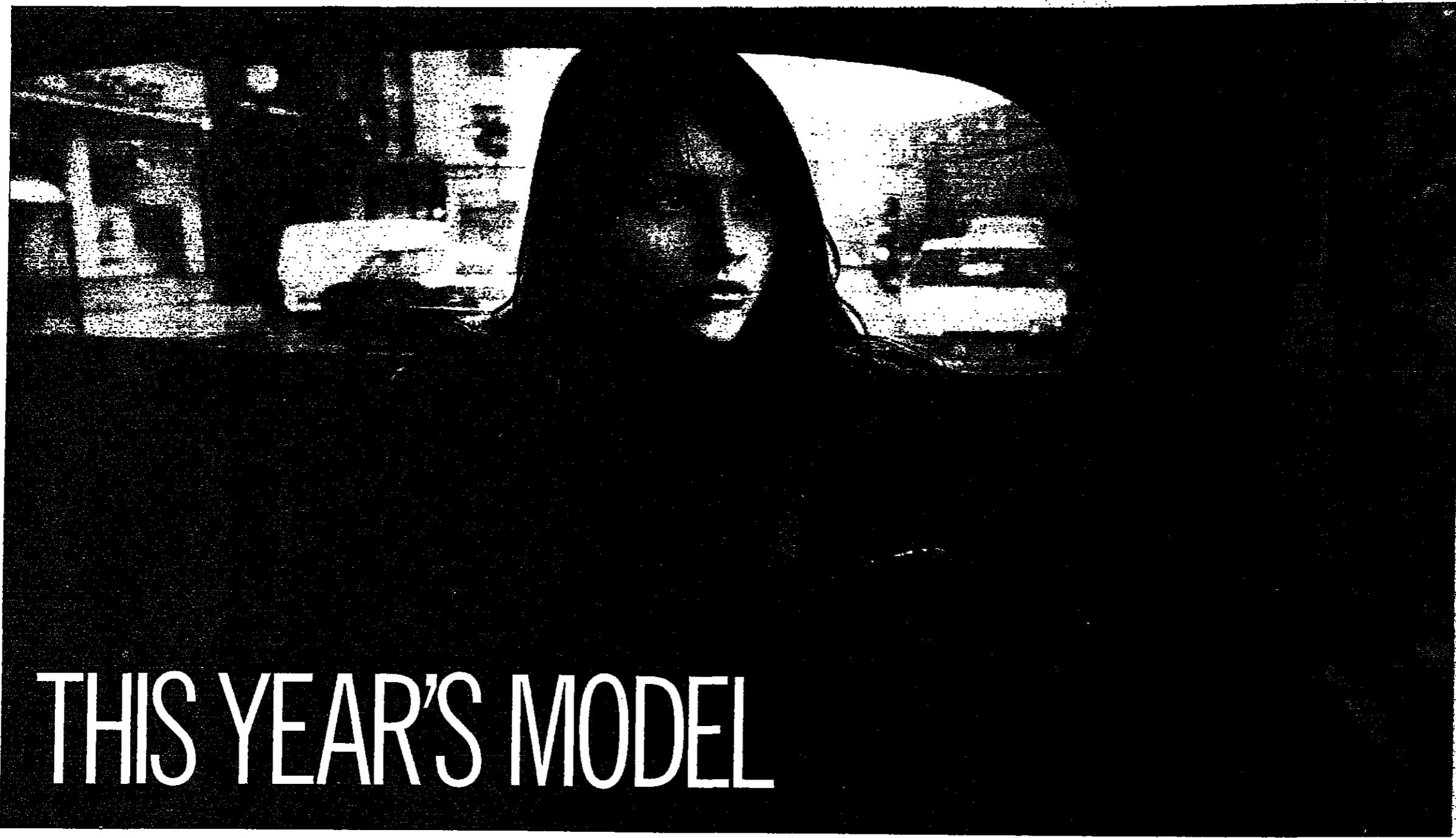
Just think of all the things you could be doing. Our **ENGLAND** brochures are full of fabulous places to stay and wonderful things to do. Look out for the sign which shows tourist board inspected accommodation. Just call us on 01271 24560 or send the coupon. Then leave the rest to us.



In the know on where to go.



picture story



THIS YEAR'S MODEL



Last year, Joanne Watkins, an unknown 16-year-old Cardiff schoolgirl, walked into the offices of Select, one of London's top modelling agencies. She was instantly thrust into the fashion limelight and is now tipped for the top of the modelling world. Edward Sykes kept his camera on her during London Fashion Week



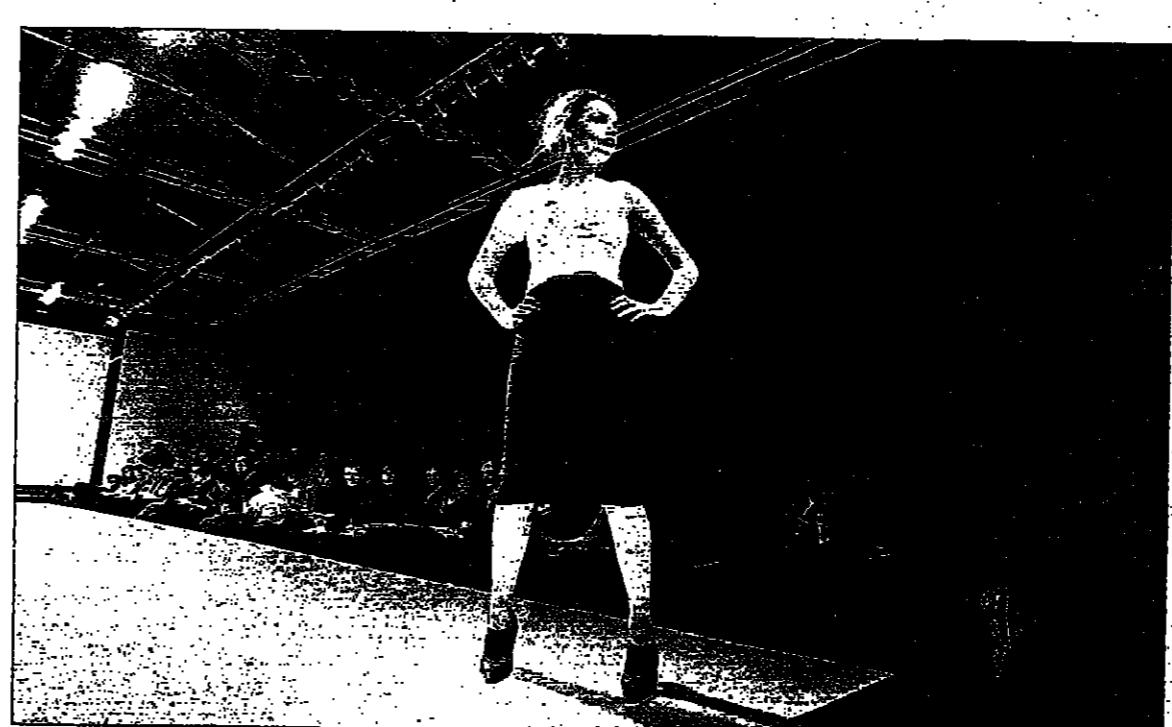
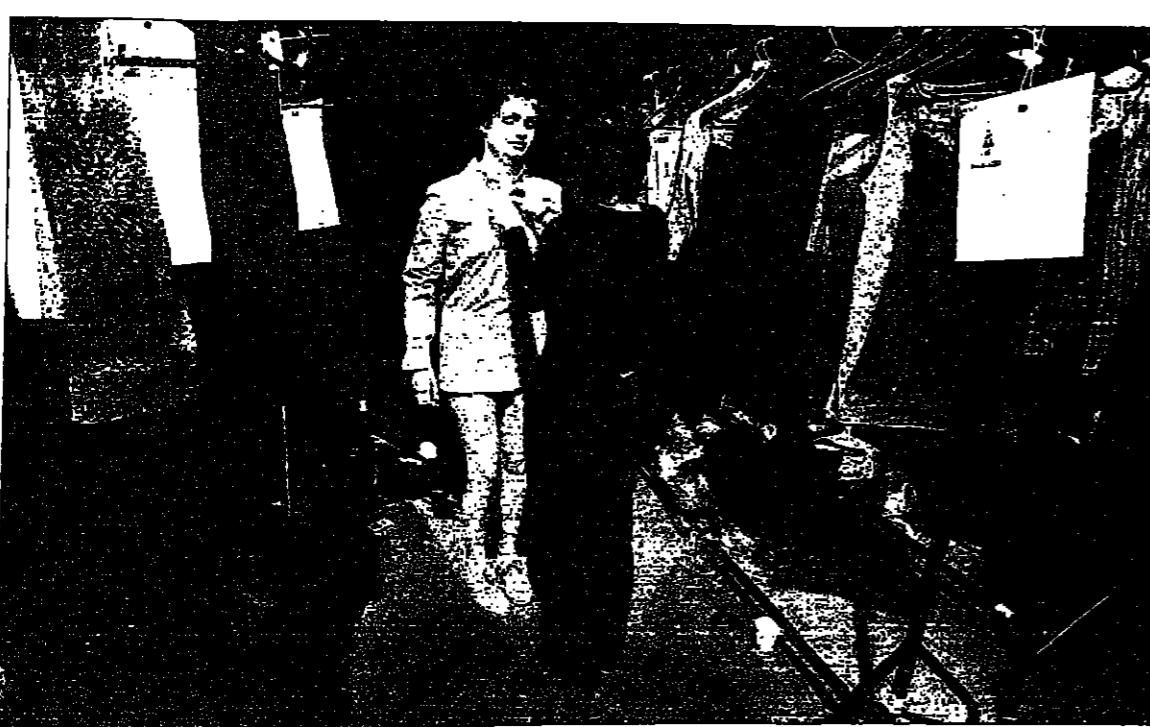
Top picture: London Fashion Week coincides with Joanne's half-term – but it's no holiday. Sight-seeing is confined to peering out of a taxi, and her time is spent rushing between her five main catwalk shows, castings, photo shoots and meetings at Select. In the evening, (above) she unwinds to some A-level homework: if the modelling dream goes sour, her contingency plan is a degree in psychology

Right: large amounts of hairspray from a previous show are brushed out backstage at the Copperwheat Blundell show (last year's British New Generation Designer of the Year). Models are used to painful grooming, but during London Fashion Week, they can expect to put on violently different styles and catwalk attitudes

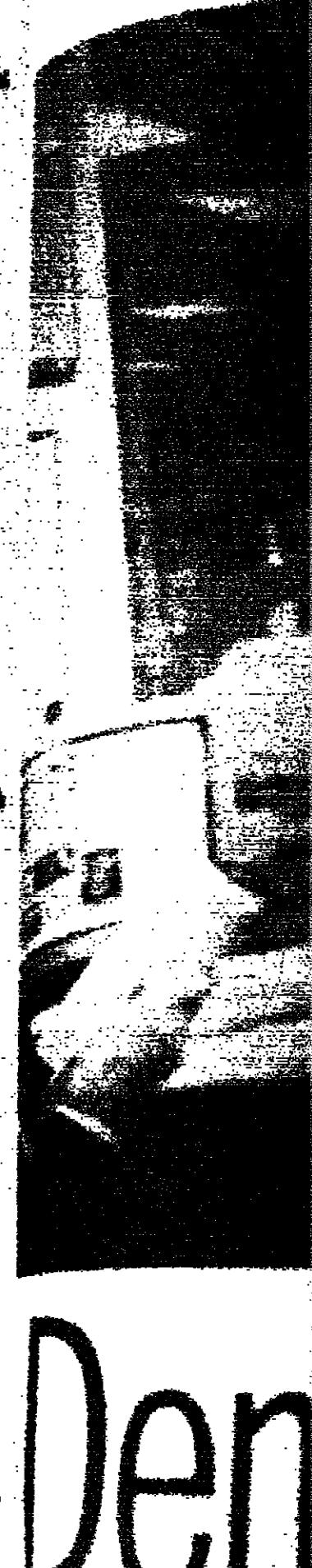
Below: being assisted by a dresser into Copperwheat Blundell's street-style clothes. The collections modelled are for autumn and winter. Backstage is one of the few opportunities to chat with fellow models: most are too tired to socialise afterwards

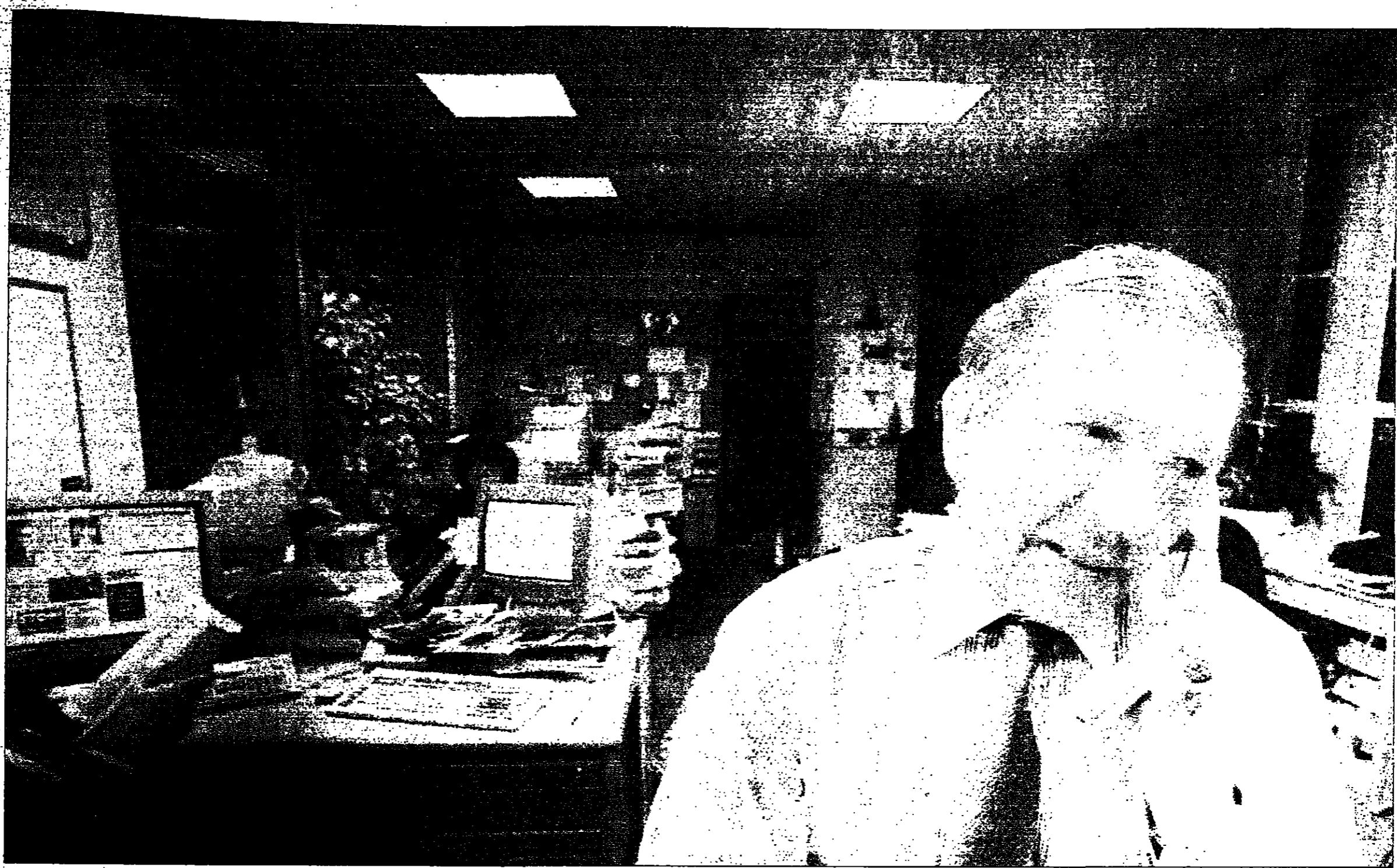


Above: In between catwalk castings, Joanne visits a fashion photographer who studies her book with a view to a possible forthcoming shoot. She can already expect to command up to \$10,000 a day



Below: on the catwalk at the bouncy and distinctively feminine Antonio Berardi show. After appearing in the current Gucci advertising campaign for the Spring collection, Joanne Watkins has become one of the faces to watch. As soon as the 32-show week comes to an end, she will jet off to Milan





Dempster in excelsis

The week the world learnt of the royal divorce found Nigel Dempster, guru of gossip, in his element.
By John Walsh. Photograph by Herbie Knott

On the third floor of the *Daily Mail* headquarters in west London, Nigel Dempster is doing what he does best. Gazing purposefully through his window, which overlooks the electric ribbon of Kensington Church Street, he is explaining to a far-off bit of the Empire what the Royal Family is up to.

...And he does not feel the British public would put up with him if he married Camilla, Diana? Well, she is not a greedy person. Her brother, Lord Spencer, who now lives in South Africa, told me Buckingham Palace is surprised by the modesty of her demands. As he updates the monarchists of New Zealand on the level of Diana's cupidity, Dempster's voice is infected with absolute authority, with no quaver of doubt or ambiguity. Only a simpleton, you feel, could imagine there could be any other view of Chuck and Di. Much of what he says is, in fact, supposition (unless, of course, he is telepathically privy to the Prince of Wales's inner thoughts), but what Dempster supposes to be the case counts as the truth in a few million living-rooms.

"Come in! Come in!" he cries, hand over mouthpiece. "Some champagne? I think there's some white wine in the fridge." His empire is surprisingly small, considering that he has been the most famous gossip columnist in the world for at least 20 years. One expected a *chaise-longue*, a Hugh Hefner penthouse, a scenic elevator... There are just five desks, a rubber plant, photographs from jolly evenings with Peter Stringfellow, Peter McKay and various swarthy beauties. Just behind Dempster's head, the pictures are nearly beyond a fooling interview with the Duchess of York about her charities. In fact, it sounds distinctly semi-detached about the enterprise.

"I have an adviser called Neville Shulman," he explains, "who has been looking round for some time for a reputable publishing company, to say to them: do you want to expand your portfolio? It's a mating by Neville of a publisher and my name and my input. It's basically a magazine for women." Why did he want to do it? "I just think if you don't have a crack, you're not going to get anywhere. As you know, I race horses, all of his beloved racehorses, Aardwolf and Pretoria Dancer.

My timing is perfect, for the news has just broken: the Princess of Wales has finally agreed to a divorce and hinted at the terms that will be acceptable to her, and Dempster is in excelsis. He positively bristles with knowledge. You can practically hear a wash of royal tittle-tattle, a quarter-century of stories, scandals, intrigues, rumours, anticipations and reflections flooding through his cerebral cortex. He shoots the cuffs of his pyjama-stripey shirt-waist, a tattered Samuel Whiskers on a desk for his portrait, and answers the (now endlessly shrilling) phone with easy aplomb. He is as suave as Brylcreem, with just the faintest hint of poison.

After New Zealand, Canada has been ringing for his insights. The American newspapers also seem gripped by his franky devastating news from Kensington Palace. To all of them, he proffers the same firm, just-the-facts routine, leaving his interrogators with the breeze of his delivery. "Not at all," he signs off to the stunned *Washington Post*. "Feel free, send it to charity."

Doesn't he charge consultancy rates? "No, I don't. Unlike Mr. James Whitaker [the *Daily Mirror's* florid Royal watcher], who practically has his accountant sitting beside him, giving details of his account in Jersey, I just throw it all away. Of course, he will end up very rich and I won't." How high up is Dempster's best royal contact? "Well, we've got somebody sitting not 50 yards away who..." But I don't mean Richard Kay, the *Mail* journalist who has car rides with Diana. I mean the family itself. "Well, I've known Andrew Parker-Bowles for years," says Dempster with that

haven't-we-all lift of the eyebrows. "And Diana's brother – when he had that spot of bother with Sally Ann Lasson, he came straight to us." But does he have intimate chats with, say, Princess Margaret, whose biography he wrote (it was published in 1981)? Nigel is evasive. "The sadness of Princess Margaret's life is that she's now very much extraneous to the Royal Family. She said to me in the past: 'The younger ones are growing up and old Auntie won't be needed.'

The odd thing is, we are not here to discuss the Royal Family at all. The occasion of our meeting is the birth of *Dempster's*, a brand new glossy magazine launched on Thursday. A hefty 150-page quarterly, subtitled "Life with Style". It's a narcoleptically familiar mix of celebrity chat (Liz Hurley and Kenneth Branagh, though not, tragically, together). "Society insight" (druggy marquesses and bolted ears), fashion and a rather snooty guide to the Season. Imagine *Tatler* with no sophistication or sense of humour and you're there. What's surprising is that the tall Nigel appears on the masthead only as "contributing editor", and contributes little beyond a fooling interview with the Duchess of York about her charities. In fact, it sounds distinctly semi-detached about the enterprise.

"I have an adviser called Neville Shulman," he explains, "who has been looking round for some time for a reputable publishing company, to say to them: do you want to expand your portfolio? It's a mating by Neville of a publisher and my name and my input. It's basically a magazine for women." Why did he want to do it? "I just think if you don't have a crack, you're not going to get anywhere. As you know, I race horses, all of his beloved racehorses, Aardwolf and Pretoria Dancer.

My timing is perfect, for the news has just broken: the Princess of Wales has finally agreed to a divorce and hinted at the terms that will be acceptable to her, and Dempster is in excelsis. He positively bristles with knowledge. You can practically hear a wash of royal tittle-tattle, a quarter-century of stories, scandals, intrigues, rumours, anticipations and reflections flooding through his cerebral cortex. He shoots the cuffs of his pyjama-stripey shirt-waist, a tattered Samuel Whiskers on a desk for his portrait, and answers the (now endlessly shrilling) phone with easy aplomb. He is as suave as Brylcreem, with just the faintest hint of poison.

After New Zealand, Canada has been ringing for his insights. The American newspapers also seem gripped by his franky devastating news from Kensington Palace. To all of them, he proffers the same firm, just-the-facts routine, leaving his interrogators with the breeze of his delivery. "Not at all," he signs off to the stunned *Washington Post*. "Feel free, send it to charity."

Doesn't he charge consultancy rates? "No, I don't. Unlike Mr. James Whitaker [the *Daily Mirror's* florid Royal watcher], who practically has his accountant sitting beside him, giving details of his account in Jersey, I just throw it all away. Of course, he will end up very rich and I won't." How high up is Dempster's best royal contact? "Well, we've got somebody sitting not 50 yards away who..." But I don't mean Richard Kay, the *Mail* journalist who has car rides with Diana. I mean the family itself. "Well, I've known Andrew Parker-Bowles for years," says Dempster with that

Pink Post-It notes ("This Morning want interview", "BBC World Service TV tomorrow am – pls ring"), settle like snowflakes on Dempster's word processor until the screen is wholly obscured. ITN are in the car park...

Then there's an unmissable summons from above. Sir David English, the sainted Editor-in-chief of the *Mail* titles, would like Nigel's two-penn orth on Channel One, his new cable station. Could he oblige? So we trot down the corridors, and ascend to a draughty balcony, where Nigel does his perching routine on a marble buttress in front of a rickety camera and it begins again, the same litany of detail: "She's obviously got everything she wants. She's got the title. She's got the money. She's got Kensington Palace. She's got the children – so what more could she want? But she's not a greedy person. Her brother, Lord Spencer..." His black moccasins emphasise his unusually small feet, like a ballerina's (he and his wife are keen balleromaniacs), and he smooths an errant hair over a wayward earpiece with practised hand. There is something inescapably camp about Dempster, an over-emphatic flaring Englishness shared by Jeremy Brett and Noel Coward, the latter of whom he occasionally resembles (and, while we're at it, with his glasses on he's a ringer for Sir David Frost). You have to remind yourself that the Greatest Living Englishman, in Auberon Waugh's happy phrase, is a foreigner.

Sir of. He's Australian, born in India of a Scottish father and a Cornish mother, a mongrel provenance of which he is clearly proud. "Yes, I am an Australian, and in this job you have to be a foreigner really; you can't sustain the curiosity level if you're part of the whole circuit." He went to Sherbourne (Second term 1955 – I checked in *The Sherbourne Register* which he keeps handily in his drawer) where his best friend was Richard Eyre of National Theatre fame. Open on Dempster's desk is a letter from the Sherbourne School Appeal. "I am so pleased you can join us for lunch at the Cavalry and Guards Club on Wednesday" it begins. Has he always had this devotion to his Alma Mater? Dempster roars. "I was expelled, for God's sake. I was asked to leave. Too disruptive an influence. I would never do as I was told and I had a huge gang of friends, so it felt as if the whole school was being undermined."

After working in Lloyds and the Stock Exchange, he sold vacuum cleaners for a while and drifted into journalism. More to the point, he discovered the Debs' season in March 1959, the moment from which he traces "my downfall", plunging into a hundred balls, boudoirs and cleavages like a dingo in a dinner jacket. Then he started selling little diary pieces to William Hickey at the *Daily Express*, then he met Lord Beaverbrook at Cowes. His *Mail* column started in 1973 and hits its 23rd birthday this year. "I've seen off 11 William Hickies," he says with satisfaction, perhaps unable to believe that some people might wish to give up writing gossip in favour of something more serious.

Why, I ask, do people need gossip? What's it for? "I think it's a currency," he says. "It's a way of conversing with people when you're sitting on a train and it's cold or you're in the pub at lunchtime and you've nothing to talk about; it's a slightly more sophisticated version of 'Have you heard the one about?'" But isn't it a sociological thing, about feeling

superior to people who are supposed to be your social betters? "There's an element of having something that puts you in a position of some importance, whether it's a story about a pop group or it's just, 'Have you heard who Diana is with at this precise moment?'"

Actually, Nigel, I was wondering... "The answer is nobody at the moment. After Will Carling there was this chap called Wally, but neither's on her marriage list, I'm pretty sure. She's very lonely at present. In fact, I hear that people are starting to leave the Harbour Club because Diana's always popping up beside them and they don't like it."

How does the column work? Does the stuff about the minor aristocrats come rolling in with every post? "Well, I have lunch with sources every day, of course. But I have literally hundreds of friends and they ring up from all over the world and keep in touch. They're all like-minded people. A chap'll ring me from New York and say, 'You will never believe what happened last night.' They aren't journalists, but they're people who read newspapers and enjoy gossip, they're old pals of mine and they're doing me a favour and maybe themselves one, too." He would not, on the other hand, refrain from stitching up one of the myriad friends, unless it would prejudice the flow of information. "You have to ask yourself, 'What's the point of shafting a regular provider of first-class information for the sake of one story, when they could be helpful and useful for another 15 years?'"

Over the years, Dempster has noted with irritation that his patch has been well and truly invaded. "When I started in newspapers," he reminisces with a sigh, "gossip was in the gossip columns. Now it's on page one, it's on page 100, it's everywhere. There's sporting gossip, political gossip columns, there's even gossip about estate agencies. The thing that I helped to evolve – well, everything's a gossip column now." Do people still get indignant about appearing in diaries, or has society evolved beyond that? "I don't believe there are things that upset people any more – as with oil spillages, people have got used to them. I'm writing pretty much as I did before. But people's thresholds of what's good and bad behaviour do change. Like when Gerald Ronson came out of prison and was photographed shaking hands with the Queen Mother, one of the papers ran a headline saying, 'Have You No Shame?'. The answer is, there is no shame these days."

I leave, shaking my head sadly over the iniquities of the world. Mr. Dempster, the man with a thousand friends whose usefulness provide him with an expensive livelihood and a glossy magazine in his name and his image, is on the phone again. He is arranging to talk to *Good Morning America* next day and this is a pre-talk briefing. He waves goodbye and his voice settles into the familiar, burnished array of certitudes: "No, she's quite entitled to make these statements on her own; she doesn't have to ask Buckingham Palace. She can do what she wants. Although living almost next door to her at Kensington Palace is her sister Jane, who's married to the Prince's secretary, Robert Bertie Fellowes. Yes she'll keep the Palace. And the children, of course. But she's not a greedy person." The voice follows you, relentlessly, down the corridor.

Is it some sort of identity crisis? Why else would a grown man want to festoon his person with the alphabet?

By Louise Levene

Melanie Eastwick had nametapes in her knickers. No one knew why. Quite what picture her mother had formed of the rough and tumble of kindergarten life was never spelled out but whatever happened, Deirdre was prepared. The same mystery surrounds the monogramming habit. What do people imagine is going to happen to their pillow cases? Even for the tiny handful of starch queens who send their laundry out, the monogram serves no practical function: laundries mark dirty linen with their own system of cabalistic signs: your button-downs are not being sorted by the any-three-initials you paid £3.50 to have stitched on to the breast pocket.

He climbs out of his BMW (numberplate ESN 1) strolls towards you, combination locked briefcase in hand, the tooling of his maximum-three-initial monogram glinting in the spotlights of the hotel lobby. On his pinstripe a two initial ring, at each cuff monogrammed links; his shirt pocket emblemated with the now familiar logo. Is it some sort of identity crisis? Why else would a grown man want to festoon his person with the alphabet? Perhaps in the hope that the handy mnemonic will awaken in you the memory of a previous meeting. Perhaps he can't remember his own name?

Monogramming is now available in every catalogue you open but has its roots in an older, far more aristocratic tradition in which plate and linens would be branded with some device to personalise them and speed up the audit should any of the gear ever pass out of the family at weddings and funerals. It aided identification during the extended family wash and saved squabbles at inns or house parties - travelling without one's own bed linen in the 18th century was unthinkable. Such monogramming still persists in aristocratic establishments where coronets hover grandly over the initials. Unlike the bottom-drawer tradition of the middle-class trousseau, aristocratic linen usually passes through the male line. Should the toff in question marry again the needle-

woman faced the thankless task of unpicking her work and stitching in the new wife's initials - and you wonder why they're all called Caroline. Middle-class monograms were solely to aid in sorting laundry.

Wendy Helford, deputy curator of Textiles and Dress at the V&A calls attention to *The Workwoman's Guide* of 1840, which recommends the owner's initials followed by the code B for Best, F for Family and S for Servants. Ornamental white work was originally reserved for things that would show, like handkerchiefs, but by the end of the 19th century there was a vogue for larger, more elaborate displays.

The marking of linen had fallen out of favour by the middle of this century, when needlework teaching was in decline and high labour costs made hand embroidery a prohibitively expensive luxury. The development of new technology made machine monogramming quick and easy and led to a revival in the practice of personalisation. Suddenly a bog-standard catalogue purchase could be given that special something by the addition of a few inches of satin stitch. The naughtiness of monogramming is confirmed by the Duchess of York's fondness for it. Her wedding dress, you may remember, sported a gigantic hand-headed A entwined with an A on the bum.

Outside what Liz Elvin of the Royal School of Needlework affectionately dubs "The Households" there is little call for hand sewn work, although the school will still do it - at a price: three inch-high initials will set you back £60. Back in the 1920s they did all the Queen Mother's trousseau. No doubt she knickers ever be knocked down at auction they will be identified by the stitchwork - the only reliable means of identifying the many pairs of Queen Victoria's drawers that find their way into the salerooms.

Machine embroidery has deprived the monogram of its cachet. The White House, the London linen specialist, feels that the whole business has become rather declassé. "It's not frightfully English. It's now considered not quite the thing. I think the Americans have rather done it in."

The American appetite for initials bric-a-brac is almost insatiable. Opinion is divided on the social status of the monogram in the US. Lisa Birnbaum, author of *The Preppie Handbook*, claimed that it was good news but Paul Fussell, author of the *Waspish* and snobby *Caste Marks* felt that all visible lettering is a sign of lower-class insecurity. The desperate need to personalise everyday objects, he argues, springs from a misguided attempt to ape the upper classes.

In fact, even the Americans aren't as keen as they were, with only 15 per cent of the White House's transatlantic trade requesting the full personal treatment. Or maybe they just begrudge spending £10 for each letter done by a hand-driven machine. The new generation of sewing machines do it far more cheaply and can run off a few letters in seconds. With the serious machines you can programme in a crest and initials of baroque complexity and have it stored for future use.

Eximious, a Belgravian boutique, gives linens a wide berth - "It's so non-U to have monograms on shirts": a belief confirmed by the fact that Johnny Bryan sports

his initials on his breast pockets - but will gladly slap your name on anything from a champagne stopper to a coat-hanger. Their speciality is the christening and wedding present market - and very lucrative it is, too. Their American mailing list has swelled to five million. Eximious proves once and for all the exact social status of monogramming: it has a royal warrant from the Prince of Wales. Charles apparently likes to have his luggage gold blocked. Why? In case it gets lost and ends up in Karachi? Mind you, it might enhance the resale value. Indeed, if Fergie has had the forethought to have her trousseau monogrammed she might just be able to pay off the overdraft.

Doing it yourself:

John Lewis sells sewing machines that monogram. The New Home Memorycraft 4000 has a pre-set alphabet and costs £775. More sophisticated machines can be programmed with any design if you buy a scanner (around £500): Elna Emission £1,550 or Brother Super Galaxy 2 £1,800.

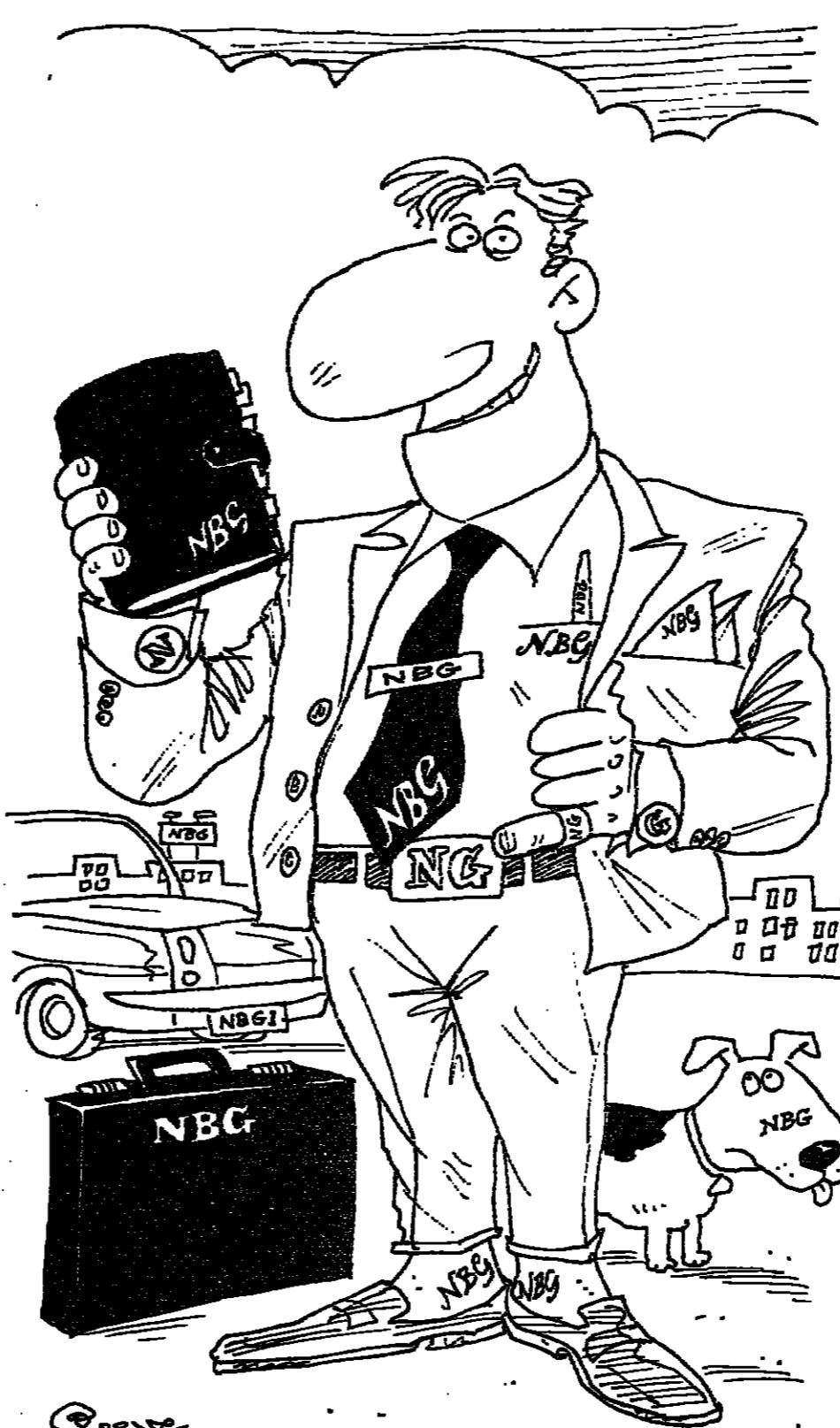
The Royal School of Needlework (0181-943 1432) offers courses ranging from a day to a year in length. A day's needlework lesson costs £36.

The Dover Bookshop, 18 Earleham Street, London WC2 (0171-836 211) sells books of decorative monograms.

Harrods will engrave jewellery, lighters and crystal at a rate of £12.50 for two initials. Towels and linens can be monogrammed in three weeks; £6.50 for three one-inch initials.

Eximious, 10 West Halkin Street, London SW1 (0171-235 7828). Supplies anything that is monogrammed, for example three children's beechwood coat-hangers with name on, £19.50, a leather chewing-gum holder, £13, or a silver champagne stopper with one initial, £26.50.

The White House, New Bond Street, London W1 (0171-629 3521). Hand-embroidered lawn handkerchiefs with one initial, £7.50.



AUCTIONS

ous," wrote one, "and may result in closure. This after 25 years trading will you please allow dispensation for a change of number plates."

Whitefriars glass prices, tipped to "go mad" on this page last week, made a predictably loony start at Sotheby's sale last Monday. A lot of seven modern faceted Whitefriars paperweights, estimated £250-£350, brought gasps as the price soared to £1,438. The next lot, eight modern millesime Whitefriars paperweights with the same estimate, made £943.

New names are always welcome in the depressed modern pictures market. The cover of Sotheby's catalogue for Wednesday's mid-season modern Brit and Irish sale (10.30am) shows the young Mick Rooney's *Seaside Café* of 1992 (£10,000-£15,000), a fly-on-the-wall view of an old woman in a flower-decked straw hat sitting at a bright yellow Formica table as a waiter drops a plate in the swirling hysterical interior. Rooney's work is seldom seen at auction. William Roberts' Fifties painting *The Birth of Venus* - buxom blonde nude appears before sunburnt fishermen - is a face we have seen somewhere before. Now estimated at £30,000-£40,000 it fetched £82,500 on the crest of the boom in the same saleroom in May 1990. Those were the days.

The DVLA has a bulging file of pleas by pre-1991 motorists to rid them of the baleful influence of the Beast by changing their numberplates. Some complained that the sight of 666 appeared to provoke other motorists to bump into them, others that it was ruining them. "My business problems have become extremely seri-

The best crisps in the world

By Gina Cowen

A few weeks ago my mum and I were driving up to Scotland to visit some relatives we'd never met. That we never even knew we had. Discovered by complete chance during a phone conversation with a listed buildings planning officer on behalf of a Polish friend who was thinking of buying some remote Scottish cottage. The guy turned out to be my second cousin.

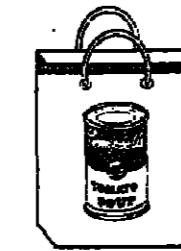
On the way up it was only by complete chance that I bought a packet of Seabrook crisps. Stopping off to fill the car just south of Gretna Green I wanted a sandwich. The selection was very sad. I picked up a packet of crisps instead. Spring Onion. Seabrook. Never heard of them, but a nice packet. A Forties design. No lurid colour clashes. No lure of an instant £10,000. Just a packet of crisps. We shared it, my mother handing me crisps while I drove. They lasted about 15 seconds. I suggested we might go back for another couple of packets but a) Mum said "Darling!"

They were the best crisps I'd ever eaten. Previous affairs (with Walkers and Kettle's) were over. I kept a surreptitious but unsuccessful Seabrook alert on our short visit to Scotland, and then contrived a stop

on the way down just south of the border. There we were directly opposite the first station. But the station on our side didn't stock Seabrook crisps. This overwhelming urge came over me. As I don't normally risk my life for under 30p I ran across the motorway and bought 25 packets and then ran back. My mother had gone white.

They are crisp, of course. Crinkle cut and sprinkled with sea salt. Thin but not wafer thin. On the packet it says "more than a snack". I think this is because you end up eating about 10 packets. They come in 17 flavours. Original (ie. sea salted), Cheese and Onion, Salt and Vinegar, Prawn Cocktail, Spring Onion, Beef, Smokey Bacon, Canadian Ham, Cheesey, Cream Cheese and Chives, Garlic & Herb, Indian Tandoori, Mexican Chilli, Pickled Onion, Roast Chicken, Tomato Sauce, Worcester Sauce. My favourite are Original, followed by Spring Onion, Smokey Bacon and Canadian Ham.

Seabrook are available from the Scottish border to the north Midlands. You can find them in parts of East Anglia, the South Coast, the West Country and Central Scotland. But London? Our loss. Jack Harrison the sales director



bazaar

Good thing

Susan Lethbridge tapestries, £13.95

Most children's

tapestry kits

feature teddies and

kittens in lots

of pink and blue.

Instead, Susan Lethbridge

does humorous

designs of farm

and jungle animals in bold colours.

Our favourites were

the cockerel (right)

and a fat orang-utan

cutting a banana.

The stitch is ultra simple

and at 12 stitches to

the inch you can fill the

end product into a cushion with a wild gingham back.

Send for a catalogue to Susan Lethbridge Tapestry

Designs, Honeyhead, Simonsbath, Nr Minehead,

Somerset TA23 7JX (0164 383 1348)

Mad thing

Bath tap salt and pepper mills, £19.95 a pair

If conversation at your dinner parties is prone to dry up, these bath tap salt and pepper mills are guaranteed to supply at least another half a minute of lively conversation. Unscrew the cold for salt, the hot for pepper. Mail order only from Gizmo & Widget, PO Box 3983, London SE22 0RO (0181-290 0891)



Checkout

Muji

Concept: Japanese minimalism, what the novelist Douglas Coupland defined in *Generation X* as "the most frequently offered interior design aesthetic used by rootless career-hopping young people". What Japanese minimalism means in practice is paying £2.75 for 20g of imported seaweed salad. Dinky packaging, though, rust-red on white, and with real Japanese writing, too!

Image: A Japanese Heals? Or an Oriental version of Woolworths? They really should make up their minds.

Stock: A few clothes (often in stereotypically small sizes); chi-chi stationery; Spartan bathroom-ware; and basic kitchen utensils, many of which are made of aluminum (don't mention the words "Alzheimer's disease"). Upstairs there's an obligatory futon, but most of the other bits of furniture - and storage boxes - are made either of cardboard or MDF (medium-density fibreboard), which looks like varnished chipboard but costs about 17 times as much. MDF! MFI more like.

Customers: On the afternoon we went, they seemed to consist of polo-necked Europeans, looking like extras from the latest Kieslowski film, and one distinctly puzzled looking Japanese tourist. Surely his yen should have got him more soap to the pound than this (three bars cost £2.60, reduced from £3.95)?

Best buys: Muji cola - a talking point in your fridge for just 45p. "Their underwear's very good," female friend advises.

Worst buy: 50 grammes of dried veg (£2.75).

The Muji game: Every so often Muji neglects to label a product in English. Is it a Zen paper clip? A ramen stirrer? An implement to remove stones from Japanese horses' hooves? Questions like these offer hours of fun for all the family.

Where can I find one? Muji has branches in London, on Shelton Street, Kensington High Street and Carnaby Street, and in Glasgow. It also has concessions in Liberty stores. For further information call head office on 0944 1197

NO SOFT DRINK



HOT FROM JAMAICA
Also available in 1.5 litre bottles

John Windsor

arts

It is 11pm at the Groucho Club party to celebrate John Rocha's catwalk triumph at London Fashion Week. I am cornered, somewhere between Van Morrison and Boy George, by Elaine, a drunken stylist from *Murie Claire*. "Boy George. He really should change his name to... um... Boy Pork. Look at him. Talk about fat. Who the hell dresses him anyway?"

"Voyage," she slurs. "Comme des Garçons. That's what he should be wearing."

"Maybe he dresses himself," I suggest.

"Believe me, sweetheart," says Elaine. "One doesn't dress oneself at a John Rocha party. You approach designers, you think about it, you get advice."

"So what does one wear at a John Rocha party?" I ask.

"John Rocha," she replies. "It is considered polite."

Pretty soon, Van Morrison and Boy George do a song, which, unfortunately, neither of them know, in tribute to John Rocha. It gets a big cheer, as one would expect, especially as everything tonight is getting a big cheer. When John Rocha walks in, he gets a big cheer. He gets a big cheer when he sits down. When somebody says: "Ladies and gentlemen - John Rocha!" he gets another big cheer. When he says: "Thank you," he gets a huge cheer.

We are all thrilled, especially John Rocha, who says: "I'm thrilled!" and everybody cheers. It would be easy to make friends tonight - all you'd have to do is holler: "John Rocha!" and you would immediately be wholeheartedly



DICKIE FANTASTIC
on the schmoze

applauded and welcomed into fashionable society.

"That's Van Morrison," whispers the lady in front of me queuing for the bar. And the whispers go frontwards and backwards, and pretty soon the whole queue is jabbering about *nothing* else. Van Morrison is at the back of the queue, waiting for a drink and together we are united in our combined quest to have a drink.

This moment of harmonious rapture lasts exactly 30 seconds, at which time Van Morrison storms elegantly through the throng - as is his unquestionable right as a personage of celebrity - and takes his place at the front of the queue. We allow it, of course: we grin and part. There is absolutely no doubt in anyone's mind that Van Morrison deserves to go to have a drink before us. He is, after all, Van Morrison.

And then, a moment later, the spell is broken. "Did you see what that bastard just did?" mutters the lady in front of me.

"What a bastard," replies someone else. "Who does he think he is?"

"It's only Van Morrison, for God's sake," says another.

"Bastard," we all agree. And then Van Morrison emerges from the front of the queue, elegantly clutching a drink, and we all smile ingratiatingly.

If we are to confer a gift on future generations, it should be something bold but practical

"If an earthquake were to engulf England tomorrow," the popular Victorian author Douglas Jerrold once wrote, "the English would manage to meet and dine somewhere among the rubbish, just to celebrate the event." Jerrold was making fun of the Victorian passion for jubilee and jamboree, a commitment to civic festivities that has bequeathed to us endless photogravures of top-hatted dignitaries taking a 14-course meal in the Greenwich Foot Tunnel or inside the western tower of the Saltash suspension bridge. For Jerrold the British displayed a sort of national genius for commemoration, however inappropriate or temporary the object of their celebration. But we have lost the knack, it seems. Simon Jenkins, who is one of the Millennium Commissioners, the body responsible for dispensing some £1.6bn of lottery funds, has reportedly expressed disappointment at the unimaginative nature of most of the bids he and his colleagues are receiving.

I will confess myself to having a small fantasy about the millennium, one based on the equally illogical glee with which children wait for the mileometer in a car to tick over from 9,999 miles to 10,000. Like the millennium, this event is purely numerological - the mile that succeeds is exactly the same as the mile before it, the inside of the car just as tedious as it was before. And yet the chorus line of numbers seems to mark a moment of significance, to offer a respite from boredom. In my recollection of this experience,

thought, we almost always missed the transition - we would be warned that it was on its way, stare dutifully at the tumbling succession of digits and then be distracted by something more interesting out of the window. When we remembered to check again it always seemed to have moved on to 10,002. My occasional daydream is that the same might happen with the millennium, that the current frenzy of anticipation will give way to boredom and that half-way through 2002 someone will say, "Oh no! We missed it!"

It won't happen, naturally, which means that we have to address ourselves to the question of how best to extract value for money from the huge sums to be spent on celebration. And it seems to me that any decent scheme must sit on one of two extremes - it must itself be millenarian in its ambitions, aiming at a durability measured in hundreds of years, or it must be determinedly transitory, an event designed to have a firework's lifespan, but to leave a glowing after-image in the mind's eye. The Crystal Palace provides an interesting case history in this respect - a prodigious achievement of Victorian technology which lived beyond its designed lifespan. Paxton's building was, literally, a crystallisation of Victorian engi-

neering confidence - a building of such imaginative audacity that it forced new building techniques to be developed. But it was not intended by its creator as a permanent building. The ingenious and efficient guttering, for instance, which carried away rainwater and internal condensation, was made out of oak - a fact that contributed to the building's final immolation. But without that fire the legacy of the Crystal Palace would be very different - an embarrassment in Sydenham rather than the most glorious glasshouse ever. There are few things more bleak than a pavilion that has outlived its purpose. Go and look at the Alexandra Palace if you doubt it.

The lesson that the Crystal Palace teaches is that permanent memorials must be flexible, must be able to bend themselves to changes in use and reverence. There is a scheme that already exists which meets all the necessary criteria. It is bold but practical and would leave a durable legacy. This is Richard Rogers's plan, (already worked out in considerable detail) to transform the banks of the Thames by burying the traffic of the Embankment beneath a park and stitching the two sides of the river together with new bridges. If we are to confer a gift on succeeding generations it should be something like this, not one that will grow old to embarrass them but one that will simply grow.

At the other extreme, that of exuberant but temporary joy, there is already a private scheme well advanced - the proposal for a Mil-



Walking on ice: a 17th-century pleasure

Mary Evans Picture Library

lennium wheel on the South Bank of the river. But I would like to propose another - one that draws its inspiration from the most tantalising of historical jubilees. London should have another ice-fair - should intoxicate itself with the marvel of walking on water, a pleasure provided for free in the 17th century, when the combination of icy winters and restricted flow through London Bridge allowed

the Thames to freeze over and carnival to spill out of narrow streets.

These days we couldn't rely on nature to do the freezing - but the obvious site is perfectly placed - Millwall Outer and Inner Dock, at the heart of the Greenwich site, perfectly served by the London Docklands Railway. Best of all, when the celebrations were finished it would melt away, leaving no trace but a memory of delight.

reviews

THEATRE The Ends of the Earth, Cottesloe, London

YOUR baby daughter is

gravely ill and you, a

heavy smoker, are led to

believe that you can save her

life by forswearing fags.

That's the fraught, fable-like

situation facing the protago-

nist of David Iain's new

play *The Ends of the Earth*.

An English geologist at

work on the construction of

a dam in an unnamed

Balkan state, Daniel

(Michael Steen) has started

to crack up badly. His wife

(Samantha Bond) has had

to leave her sick baby and fly

out to persuade him to

come home. He's informed

that there's an old wise man

who wants to help him;

their encounter ends with the

injunction against smoking.

There's a compelling

novel by Brian Moore

called *Cold Heaven*, in

which the heroine is landed

with a similar plight. The

husband she was just about

to leave becomes dependent

on her agreeing to

play Bernadette to

recent apparitions of the

Virgin Mary. It's a more awk-

wardly intimate and intense

sacrifice that is demanded

not to alleviate the self-

obsession that the audi-

ence might diagnose as Daniel's chief problem.

The trouble with this

often-gripping piece is its

failure to establish a strong

enough sense that the central

couple are, first and

foremost, loving, grievously

worried parents and that it's from this anxiety that all the self-refering guilt and

festerings introspection

springs. The baby, however,

is so impalpable a presence

in either the piece or in

Andre Serban's otherwise

tremendous traverse pro-

duction that you begin to

think she's wholly a projec-

tion of her parents' prob-

lems rather than a human

being in her own right. She

exists only to the extent that

she can be used to set up the

facile irony that it's her

father who is really sick.

The same is largely true

of the civil strife we witness

between the Balkan moun-

tain people and the valley

people. Daniel's dam has

exacerbated this since the

water will cause disposse-

sion and will flood the site

of an historic battle. Just as

the question of the baby's

life is subordinated to her

father's existential pilgrim-

age, so the predicament of

Samantha Bond, as the

wife, copes heroically with

some pretty ungrateful dia-

logue: "My darling, my

sweet, the man I care about

and love, really love, adore.

I'm your friend." And

Michael Steen brings a

wonderful end-of-the-tether

intensity to Daniel, making

him a complex, driven crea-

ture who, you feel, deserves

a better fate than simply to

learn the banal lesson that

nobody can give you the

answers, you have to find

them for yourself.

In rep: Booking:

0171-928 2252

Paul Taylor



TELEVISION *TFI Friday*, (Channel 4)

A programme that names

the day in its title adver-

tises the mood it is aiming

for: *See First Tuesday*, *TFI Friday*'s saucy minx - F stands

for Four, honestly - captures

the spirit of devil-may-care

that comes over us all on

Poets Day (Push Off Early

- Tomorrow's Saturday, in

case you're wondering).

What makes it quintessen-

tially a Friday production,

even though it's not a programme

about horticulture, is the

fact that it is unavailable for

advance viewing, and therefore

for review.

More programmes go

out live on a Friday, or are

recorded very close to

transmission, than any other evening of the week.

This is something for the

weekend night, when the

Boys and girls came out to play

Once upon a time there were no teenagers. Then JD Salinger, James Dean and Elvis Presley appeared in the fall-out from the birth of the Atomic Age. As a cross-media festival of 'The Fifties' runs over coming weeks in several cities, Michael Bracewell explores the origins of youth culture

Sleep tight ya morons!" So Holden Caulfield, the teen hero of JD Salinger's *The Catcher in the Rye*, bids farewell to his schooling at Pencey Prep and invents the teenager as a type within literary fiction. When we link Salinger with Elvis Presley and Jimmy Dean as the founding trinity of teenage rebellion in America, we tend to forget that *The Catcher in the Rye* was published in serial form between 1945 and 1946 – 10 years before *Rebel Without a Cause* rocketed Dean to stardom and Elvis had his first hit with "Heartbreak Hotel". In this much, Caulfield was a voice ahead of his time, making his first appearance at the same time Bogart was immortalising Chandler's Philip Marlowe in *The Big Sleep*.

There were no such beings as teenagers – in a cultural sense – when Salinger created his adolescent hero of angst and ennui: there were boys and girls who had no more connection with the adult world than high schools had with a speakeasy. And that adult world was still being presented, for the most part, as a mixture of the lurid and the sophisticated, with adultery, double-dealing and dinner jackets vying for prominence as the emblems of glamour. Twenty years earlier, in *Tales of the Jazz Age*, F Scott Fitzgerald had created a teenage character called Basil Lee whose initial response to the strain of being unpopular at private school had been to fantasise a role for himself as an aristocratic secret agent in the international high society of New York. Basil's teenage revolution had been utterly divorced from adult reality – a premonition of *film noir* as pure fairy-tale. Holden, on the other hand, was wholly modern, casting down the barriers between innocence and experience with no more than a shrug and a yawn – which made him all the more shocking. Holden was wise beyond his years, and it would take the best part of a decade for the youth of America to catch up with his groundbreaking example.

By the time *The Catcher in the Rye* really took off as a publishing sensation of the early 1950s, Salinger was the reluctant celebrity author who had shaped the teenager as a tragicomic outlaw on the verge of an existential crisis. No literary novel before *The Catcher in the Rye* had spoken directly to its readers in the true voice and slang of youth. In cinema, too, teenagers had been quaint guttersnipes – as in 1938's *Angels with Dirty Faces* – whose protest was moralised as a naughtiness that could be tamed by patriarchal authority. And, while moralising would remain a feature of delinquency films and fiction in the 1950s (with Britain producing such hilarious examples of the genre as *Cash Boy*, where the morseling, typically, was the excuse for the coshing), Salinger's first teenager admits no morality other than his own, and relies on his own language to describe it. *The Catcher in the Rye*, from its laconic opening sentence ("...all that David Copperfield kind of crap..."), was both easy to read and wholly authentic in tone, thus linking it, in terms of literary style, to teenage best-sellers from Richard Allen's *Skinned* books to the whacked-out argot of Brett Easton Ellis or even the phonetic Edinburgh tones of

Holden's private school of Pencey Prep, here was an authority to rebel against. Rushing forward 20 years, to 1968, when Lindsay Anderson's *If* described a parable of teenage rebellion within an English public school, we can see how potent the equation between private education and adolescent revolt had become. Unlike the fine line between "exploitation films" and social realism, which was blurred to sensational effect in British and American delinquency films in the late 1950s (*Violent Playground* being the best example), Anderson's portrait of a teenage anarchist shares Holden's background of sequestered, bourgeois schooling. The invention of the teenager, in cultural terms, can be seen as a transvection of language and attitude between the hitherto silenced "working class" and the newly expanded middle class.

Like Holden, Salinger was ambivalent about the old Episcopalian and military traditions of his alma mater, toying with ambiguous respect for his teachers but finally pronouncing them, and their morality, to be "phoney". The world of Valley Forge had hit the rocks with the atomic bomb, and any youngster with his eyes half open had to see right through its archaic pretensions. In a neat twist of irony, Salinger's co-revolutionary in American fiction of the post-war period, William S Burroughs, had attended a similarly rugged and exclusive school at Los Alamos, Santa Fe, which was requisitioned under the War Powers Act of 1943 to become the isolated research centre for the very atomic bomb that was dropped on Japan in 1945. The film-maker John Waters, whose brilliantly observed comedies of teenage life in Baltimore in the 1950s do much to define the founding philosophy of teenagers, makes Atomic Age paranoia a central feature of the antagonism between the younger and the older generations. With teenagers, it could be said, the bomb was a social metaphor as much as a political reality, and vice versa.

Placed in the broader picture, we can see how Salinger's hero was running his back on adolescent conformity just as the United States Air Force was dropping the first atomic bomb on Hiroshima. Historically, he is the first teenage witness of the Atomic Age, finding his formative maturity in a period that was as critical as the one Henry James had experienced and described in 1913. Spiritually, the world was a harder place to believe in. By 1946, just as the new epoch of shark-finned Cadillacs, chrome trimmings and domestic technology was waiting to begin, so another era – as anticipated, by comparison, as Scott Fitzgerald's high society – was coming to an end. And it is out of the collision of these two distinct phases in history that the teenager, with protest on his mind, finally emerges.

We can see how Salinger caught the wave of change and embodied its force in Caulfield when we consider Salinger's education in relation to that of his fictional representative. Salinger attended the Valley Forge Military Academy in Pennsylvania – a manly, anti-intellectual, but expensive private school at which one was force-fed the rugged virtues of patriotism and the pioneer spirit. As with



Trainspotting. Swearing and conversational shorthand came as naturally to Salinger as nightingales did to Keats.

It is interesting to note that this ease of style, establishing the teenager's need for authenticity and sincerity, was the result of meticulous revision and Flaubertian attention to craft on the part of Salinger. This was no automatic writing, or proto-Beat transcription of everyday speech: each sentence in the novel is honed to suit the nuance of its scene and the intoxicating charms of the whole. And it hadn't been done before.

To a potentially massive readership of potential teenagers, *The Catcher in the Rye* spoke to them in their own language, seducing them into its philosophy of mistrust, rebellion and self-reliance.

This was a device that would be used to darker effect in 1962, when Burgess penned *A Clockwork Orange* in the cool slang of *nadsat*.

There is a very short step from the ethos of *The Catcher in the Rye* to the glamour of Jimmy Dean in *Rebel Without a Cause*. The original promotional poster for *Rebel Without a Cause* comes with a Salinger-esque strap-line: "Jim Stark – a kid in the year 1955 – what makes him tick like a bomb?" The film's account of the gauche teenage outsider, finding his way through the minefield of small-town high-school society, pursues the same sympathetic course between violent emotion and hypersensitivity as *The Catcher in the Rye*. Jim

Stark, though less assured than Holden Caulfield, is a teenager by virtue of his search for sincerity and a voice he can call his own. Indeed, Stark's rejection of his father rehearses Kurt Cobain's lyric that "I always wanted a father but still I got a 'Dad'". As a teenage trait, the questioning of the family against a background of volatility and nervous boredom creates characters who, when faced with the traditional rites of passage, would sooner not bother.

As a teenage trait, the will run and run, finding its way through SE Hinton's *Rumblefish*, to the "Generation X" fiction of Douglas Coupland.

Central, therefore, to the literature of teenage disaffection, is the iron curtain of apocalyptic dread (a sense that the world has already ended) and an opposition to the nuclear family. What is required, emotionally and spiritually, is an older brother or a girl to believe in. True to the social and cultural suppression of women, however (even in the teenage revolution, girls were allotted strict roles as either swooning fans or blooming girlfriends), girls come second-best to the sibling peer as brother and poet who can offer an escape from the world of "old people" which has grown precarious. Thus, what DB is to Holden Caulfield, as a near visionary poet brother, so The Motorcycle Boy is to Rusty James in *Rumblefish*. The elder brothers are martyrs for the teenage revolution, just as girlfriends can become new Eves if the teenage rebellion can achieve its rock 'n' roll Eden.

With rock 'n' roll as the teenage soundtrack, Elvis Presley could articulate youth instinctively, with none of the artistic labour required by Salinger or Dean. Just as Salinger was middle class and Dean rural middle class, so Elvis was as poor as a white could be in the southern states of America. He learnt to sing from black choirs and white radio, but his genius lay in reversing the cleanliness of white popular music to announce the exuberance and frustration of teenagers. There was nothing intellectual about Elvis (although, like Salinger and Dean, he later discovered comparative religion and eastern philosophy), and his embodiment of rock 'n' roll, as a fusion of black and white music, stormed the barricades of race and class in a way that *The Catcher in the Rye* – as a middle-class phenomenon – could never achieve.

But Salinger, it could be argued, had given intellectual authority to what Dean and Presley would translate into the mainstream media of popular culture. A self-fuelling loop was created during the 1950s by the teenage trinity of Salinger, Presley and Dean that expressed the mood of the new Atomic Age youth. This loop would simply keep on running, endlessly referring back to itself, for successive generations.

In *The Catcher in the Rye*, through the voice and dismissive philosophy of

Holden Caulfield, we can hear echoes of Arthur Rimbaud's 19th-century teen revolt ("I am from beyond the grave. Really" – wrote Rimbaud in his *Imaginaires* – "And out of work"), to say nothing of Fournier's *Le Grand Meaulnes* or Gide's *Bertrand Prud'homme*. Teenagers had been around for a long time, but before *The Catcher in the Rye* they had lacked a defining personage that would capture their audience and carry their message on a groundswell of unofficial revolution. Once found, the teenage voice would be laced with irreverence and humour, attempting to make an impossible marriage between nihilism and optimism. As Holden remarks in *The Catcher in the Rye*: "Anyway, I'm sort of glad they've got the atomic bomb invented. If there's ever another war, I'm going to sit right on the hell on top of it. I'll volunteer for it, I swear to God I will."

The Fifties' season runs to 21 April at venues in Birmingham, Cardiff and at the South Bank in London. Michael Bracewell will talk about 'The Invention of the Teenager' at the Royal Festival Hall, London SE1 (0171-928 8800) today, 7.30pm

THE WEEK IN REVIEW
David Benedict

KEY
EXCELLENT

CRITICAL VIEW

STRIKES A CHORD

THE DANCE
CRIME FICTIONS

THE PLAY
PRESENT LAUGHTER

THE EXHIBITION
SPELLBOUND

NOEL COWARD
Peter Greenaway creates a detailed installation, Douglas Gordon slows down *Psycho*, our Damien Hirst makes a movie and Paula Rego and six other artists celebrate the centenary of cinema.

ADAM MARS-JONES
Adam Mars-Jones hated "pretentious" Hirst, liked "witty" Boyd Webb, but "the core pleasures are to be found in the installations of Paez and Greenaway." Damien Hirst: "What an arsehole! Greenaway has difficulty telling life from celluloid," *Time Out* said. Paula Rego: "The strongest work she's ever done... enough in it to merit a visit," approved the *Telegraph*.

AT THE HAYWARD GALLERY
At the Hayward Gallery, London SE1 (0171-960 4208) to 5 May.

CRITIC'S CHOICE
A mixed bag but the show includes a rare sighting of Peter Greenaway's sense of humour.

books poetry

A humanist's holiday in Hell

John Mortimer offers a reader's guide to Dante's *Inferno*

Dante's *Inferno* is a 14th-century poem that seems calculated to cause the greatest possible pain to a 20th-century humanist, or to anyone who is attracted to Christianity because of its compassion and belief in the possibility of redemption. The God of the *Inferno* has precious little compassion and no forgiveness. He was the God who not only turned a blind eye to Belsen, but also exercised great ingenuity in constructing His own blood-chilling concentration camp, where sinners should suffer, not only during their brief lives, but for all eternity.

What is particular about Dante's God is that He consigns sinners to their particular circle in Hell according to an immutable tariff of offences. No attention is paid to mitigating circumstances, or the idea of doing justice to the individual soul before the Divine Court. Hell, in short, was made on exactly the lines that the present Home Secretary would wish to impose on our present sentencing system.

How do we reconcile the enjoyment of a great poem with what must seem to many of us today, a repellent theology? Our own views may be best captured by Ulysses in his speech to his sailors. He celebrates the dignity of man and says: "You were not born to live as a mere brute does. But for the pursuit of knowledge and the good". But such sensible humanism is, apparently, no better than the excuses of the gluttons and the adulterers. Ulysses is condemned as a thief and must suffer in Hell.

In an admirable Preface to Robert Pinsky's translation, John Freccero deals with past attempts to enjoy the poem without revision. Coleridge advised us to "suspend disbelief" and enjoy the poetry without accepting the theology. Erich Auerbach sug-

The Inferno of Dante

translated by Robert Pinsky
illustrated by Michael Mazur
Dent, £20

gested we separate "Dante's didactic intent from his power of representation", and held that the reality of the condemned characters overwhelmed their allegorical meaning. Perhaps we should simply remember how Dante suffered from the ruthless power-seeking and political intrigue in Florence and take Hell as an accurate picture of politics today.

The Christian God of the early Renaissance is cruel and vindictive, but his victims and the pilgrim visitors are capable of finer emotions. In the fifth Canto, and one of the poem's most beautiful passages, Francesca da Rimini, lover of her brother-in-law, Paolo, is found in the Circle of Incontinence, forever blown like a starling across a stormy sky, denied sleep or rest for ever, thrashed by the wind and calling harsh cries of agony. Francesca tells the poet that she and her lover read about Lancelot and Guinevere, the great illicit lovers, and their eyes met and "they read no more that day".

Dante describes the moment when he hears Francesca's story. He is overcome with pity for her that he falls down like a dead man. Later he finds his kind old tutor Brunetto Latini tormented among the Sodomites, condemned to burn for a hundred years if he takes a second's rest. "Might I have had my will," Dante says. "You would not have been thrust apart from human life." Perhaps one moral to be drawn from the *Inferno* is that, when it comes to a comparison between men and gods,

mankind usually comes out best. This extraordinary poem, in which Dante's contemporaries, friends and enemies, together with such legendary and historical figures as Dido, Theseus, Odysseus and Brutus, suffer the ingenious torments of the damned, has been much translated. The main problem has been what to do with Dante's *terza rima*, an internally ingenious but musically effective rhyme-scheme which calls for three rhymes repeated in the order ABA BCB CDC DED and so on. Some translators, such as John Sinclair, have avoided the daunting issue and turned the poetry of the *Inferno* into prose. Shelley translated a passage from the *Purgatorio* into pretty good *terza rima*. Dorothy Sayers, made of sterner stuff, used it in the whole of her verse translation with much success.

Robert Pinsky, a distinguished American poet, in his introduction blames the English language for being poor in rhyme, a proposition with which Byron, W.S. Gilbert and Cole Porter might not agree. He therefore makes considerable use of poor or "consonantal" rhymes of the sort used so effectively by Yeats and Auden. In my view they don't serve the magnificent sweep and clangour of the *Inferno* so well; but there are passages of beauty.

The advantages of this book are its illustrations (although I'd rather have Doré's) and the fact that the Italian original is printed on each opposite page. Even with my sketchy knowledge of the language, I can use Pinsky as a crib and enjoy the wonders of *terza rima*. I'd recommend getting hold of Sayers' version, too; it has a valuable glossary of names. Both translations are compulsively readable, just as the great poem is still calculated to make a humanist's hair stand on end.



I was a man of arms, and after that became a corded friar: Michael Mazur's illustration for Canto XVII

Upper-class yells from a quiet man

Bernard O'Donoghue discovers virile songs and blooming irises in four new collections

Robert Crawford's view of Masculinity (Cape, £7.00) is sceptical, often expressed in evocatively repellent images, like the smell of "unshowered Number Eight". But the trenchancy of his earlier poetry is only prominent in two of this book's four sections. The others are concerned with his relations with wife, child and parents: they show a tender and pious gravity which we hadn't seen before from this declarative and separatist-inclined Scot. The new Crawford is described in the first poem as "like his father, home-silents, 'A Quiet Man'".

Not that Crawford's rhetorical virility entirely deserts him as he exposes the defects of masculine ideology. The second poem, "Chaps", has an acting note (Crawford is an outstanding performer of his poems): the refrain must be "first of all yelled in an upper-class English voice - 'CHEPS!', before, 'falling to a whisper at the end'".

Some of the best effects come by way of resistance to the quietness of the family poems, as when the *vita nuova* of the previously ambitious young artist is expressed by the admirable neologism "Bovirised". The relief at the escape back into verbal sparks is unmissable in "Scotch Broth":

"A soup so thick you could shake its hand
And stroll with it before dinner".

The domestic poems are often beautiful and accomplished, especially those that offset the threat of domestic mawkishness with the consonantal roughness of Scots. But stand by for the old Crawford again, with sieves rolled for more than the washing-up.

Ruth Padel is another vigorous and forceful exponent of language, whose new book *Fusewires* (Chatto, £6.99) runs two themes together: sex (not new in her poems) and English colonising of Ireland. What is most striking

about her anti-colonial rhetoric in the latter is that their fierce, dry irony could not be employed by any Irish writer without appearing inflammatory. Padel works her two subjects together brilliantly, in titles like "Your Place or Mine?".

The second of the book's two epigraphs introduces the perfect figure for the amalgam: "Desire paths", which are "private routes through public spaces" that urban planners have not allowed for. The harshness of sex in the war-zone, in poems such as "Desire Paths of Sarajevo", is reminiscent of *Giovanni's Rainbow* in its bleakness. What is so impressive and so desolating is the Dantesque sense of misery in the spirit's fated, instinctive push towards happiness which is bound to fail in these contexts - and also maybe in any other.

Padel is an outsider in Ireland, and "foreign" is a recurrent term. Michael O'Loughlin, who has been credited with trying to write into

Irish history the Dublin urban experience it has ignored, is now on the well-beaten track of Irish poets abroad. In *Another Nation: New and Selected Poems* (Arc/New Ireland Books, £6.95), his language is lively, exuberant and profigate, as he attempts to cross-territise Irish culture with a multi-lingual cosmopolitanism, reading like a more innocent, if less ambitious, Stephen Dedalus. Despite the attractive energy, the speed and range of his references (to Trakl, Vermeer, Tsvetaeva, Brahms, Vellego) can lead to a blurring of purpose. Thus we understand his desire for the non-national simplicity of "Michael Hartnett's Irish" -

"I heard the sound
Of the snow falling through
moonlight

Onto the empty fields" - while recognising uneasily that such romanticism represents a back-sliding from O'Loughlin's grander programme.



Ruth Padel: anti-colonial rhetoric

in every line that most difficult of poetic tasks, to make the personal widely significant. With the medieval European lyric-poets, Gluck returns obsessively to the tragedy of the human in contrast to flowers: we don't bloom again. Like all large subjects, this sounds trite; the poems could not be less so, as would be evident from any quotation. The second of the seven "Matins" poems ends:

"We merely know it wasn't
human nature to love
only what returns love".

A feature of 20th-century reaction to poetry on this side of the Atlantic is that we have been so late coming to an appreciation of the great American poets, especially women such as Bishop and Adrienne Rich. We are indebted to publishers like Anvil and Carcanet who have kept writers like Gluck in our sights. She is a poet of enormous importance and intelligence; we must not miss her.



Kate Clancy: compassion for men

saves Pople from being another despondent poetic voice is his skill with the extraordinary.

Charles Boyle's *Paleface* (Faber, £6.99), although immaculately written, is in danger of being one more fed-up slim volume about British urban life which everybody knows is dire. So is Kate Clancy, although in her first collection, *Stattern* (Chatto, £6.99), she expresses a perceptive, unsentimental compassion for the male of species.

An Irish flautist busking in an alien city for his fare back to Larne is just one of a number of men and boys in these pages. With vowels composed into sequences of considerable beauty, she explores the difficult excitement of the violence, failure and disaster of human energy without condemnation and with a great deal of vivid compassion, notably in a telling poem about the James Bulger case.

the Ma
memore

Gender bending

So men sometimes write as women, and women write as men. So what? asks Judith Palmer

The Routledge Anthology of Cross-Gendered Verse
edited by Alan Michael Parker and Mark Willard

Routledge, £11.99 paperback

Once upon a time there was a poem, and it lived happily in its own slim volume. One day the poem caught the eye of an anthologist. "You're just what I've been looking for," said the anthologist. "Come home with me and I'll make you famous. You can live in my anthology with lots of other poems. I know you'll get on together, you have so much in common."

He had been a rich multi-layered poem of shifting meanings and vibrant ambiguities. "You won't need those here," said the anthologist, as he stripped him of his shimmering cloak of inflections. "Put this uniform on, it's much more practical, one size fits all. Isn't that better? Now everyone knows exactly what sort of poem you are." But did they? "I'm an exploration of the soul's conflicting impulses towards salvation," called the poem enticingly to a reader browsing nearby. "Don't be silly," replied the reader, "everyone knows you're just a minor example of a cross-gendered poem."

All anthologies are factitious but some are more factitious than others. They can provide illumination, different contexts in which to reinterpret a poem, a new lens through which to read. Too often, however, the lens distorts. Poems are wrenches from their original context and yoked by violence together, to form a sort of literary chain-gang. Alan Michael Parker and Mark Willard, editors of this anthology, are hooligan offenders, mercilessly shackling poems to their own spurious thesis.

An anthology of cross-gendered verse does not, as you might suppose, consist of poems by, for or about transvestites, transsexuals or hermaphrodites. No glimpses of Dynel tresses backstage at Madame Jo-Jo's. No Jayne County, Barry Humphries or Ruby Venezuela.

No sign either of gender-challenged poetic characters such as Shakespeare's Rosalind (requiring a boy actor to play a girl pretending to be a boy), Salmacis and Hermaphroditus (inspiration to many, including Ovid, Swinburne and Hughes), or Eliot's "old man with wrinkled dogs", the soothsayer Tiresias.

Parker and Willard have made the breathtaking discovery that poets sometimes adopt personas. Women write in the voice of men, men in the voice of women. It's taken for granted that novelists invent characters, yet is considered unusual for poets to write anything that isn't confessional or autobiographical.

So we find Chaucer's Wife of Bath riding side-saddle with ten-year-old Rupah and Blake's Nurse, Anne Sexton writes as Jesus, Lucille Clifton as Powell, the officer charged with the beating of Rodney King. A hundred poems from Middle English and early Scots through to present-day New York, offer a succession of dramatic monologues delivered in voices of the opposite sex.

Some of my favourite poems are here: Pound's "The River Merchant's Wife", for example: "While my hair was still cut straight across my forehead/ Played I about the front gate, pulling flowers"; or Rita Dove's "Genie's Prayer" under the Kitchen Sink: "The hot water squeezed/ to a tricicle so she counted out the finger holes/ and dialled her least-loved son."

"What remains consistent through all this diversity," the editors insist, "is the sense that each of these works should be seen within the context of gender and as an exploration of gender." Yet the book provides no biographical material. Are the poets gay or straight? At what stage in their lives was the poem written? Did the poet specialise in dramatic monologues or was the form chosen on one occasion only? In the absence of context, the anthology remains arbitrary.

It may look like a valid excuse for a poetry anthology, but look beneath the pancake make-up and false tits, and you'll find it's a travesty.

Entrances on the local bus

Jeff Nuttall encounters priestly kisses and exiled flautists

John Ashbery doesn't half go on. His *Can You Hear, Bird* (Carcanet, £9.95) is the latest in a steady tide of work in which his strange, faceted ecstasy is constant and unchanging. Reading him is like sitting on a bus next to a compulsive talker who promises to be the biggest bore in the world until you realise that he is entranced and so are you. He would continue nattering whether you were there or not. It is your exceptional good fortune that you are admitted to this wry, private litany.

The casual tone of these poems, which sometimes start in mid-sentence, confounds the formal norms a reader may expect. The titles don't seem to have a lot to do with the text much of the time, and the text is whispered in the ear, a droll commentary on the procession of cunningly disconnected day-to-day miracles filing past Ashbery's senses. "So runs," says he, "the carousel we call life".

The disconnected interaction of his successive experiences is the secret dynamic of his work. "Music played by a gifted child puts me in mind of a cigar I smoked on a picket line once," he says. Another time he was "digging a fire trench". Along came a fireball/ stopped, asked the time of day/ and went politely on his way." The speaker is continuously surprised and so are we.

Much of Ashbery's verse avoids obvious metre. The rhythms are oblique even when, in the long poem, "This Tuesday", he flirts with rhyming quatrains. Ashbery is a poet of vastly greater stature than any of them, but Ogden Nash, Bill Moenhaus, the crazy Dadaist of Hoagy Carmichael's college days, and Groucho Marx are all among his antecedents.

Similarly Ashbery is among the antecedents of Tess Gallagher's Portable Kisses (Bloodaxe, £7.95). Even in the midst of a most gra-

ciously negotiated grief for her dead husband, Raymond Carver, she maintains a light and wonderstruck touch for a world that is never blamed for her personal misfortune. Carver's vacated spaces are thronged with kisses which are not acts, nor gestures but which, in a spirit akin to that of Ashbery, are personae, nuisance children, priest confessors. Like Ashbery's, her tone is quiet, anti-rhetorical and friendly.

Roy Fisher has Ashbery's scale and, in his more radical pieces like "The Ship's Orchestra", an oddball novella, something of Ashbery's delight in the disconnected. "The Ship's Orchestra" is included in *The Dow Low Drop* (Bloodaxe, £8.95) which includes all his work already published in an earlier *Selected Poems* with some new work added, including a selection of passages from the title poem.

Fisher, like Bunting and Ken Smith, is one of the few British poets this century who have joined topographical material with humour and intimations of destiny. He ranges the Midlands landscape like a guide, with a kind of morose avidity for fact and detail, always bewildered about how scenes of such turbulence and invention have grown so oddly quiet.

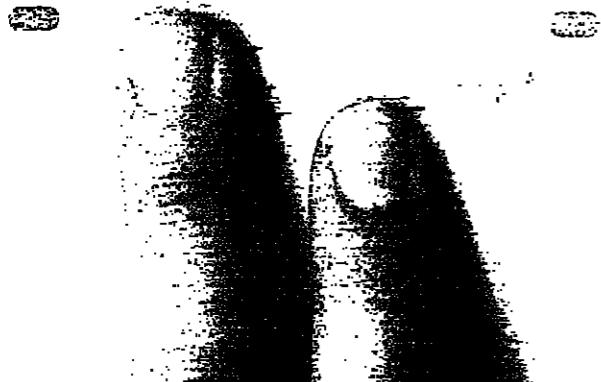
The anecdotes are always vivid and often about humanity's inability to deal with its own realities. There is a tonic frontal sanity about Fisher's work and his self-deprecating humour can make the reader (this one anyway) yelp with laughter. For instance: "Men call me Roy. Fisher. Women call me remote."

Fisher is quoted in the back cover of Ian Pople's *The Glass Enclosure* (Arc, £5.95), praising Pople's work, and you can see why. Pople writes about places illuminated by the disjointed cultures they accommodate. Thus we have

saves Pople from being another despondent poetic voice is his skill with the extraordinary.

Charles Boyle's *Paleface* (Faber, £6.99), although immaculately written, is in danger of being one more fed-up slim volume about British urban life which everybody knows is dire. So is Kate Clancy, although in her first collection, *Stattern* (Chatto, £6.99), she expresses a perceptive, unsentimental compassion for the male of species.

An Irish flautist busking in an alien city for his fare back to Larne is just one of a number of men and boys in these pages. With vowels composed into sequences of considerable beauty, she explores the difficult excitement of the violence, failure and disaster of human energy without condemnation and with a great deal of vivid compassion, notably in a telling poem about the James Bulger case.



كتاب من الأصل

Bangkok summit: EU states duck rights issues to avoid a damaging rift with world's strongest economies

Major calls for UN to put its house in order

DONALD MACINTYRE

Bangkok
John Major made a plea for rapid reform in the United Nations yesterday at the EU-Asia economic summit, as most European leaders agreed to avoid confrontation with China and South-East-Asian economic powers over human rights.

Mr Major pressed the case for streamlining the UN and putting it on a firm financial footing following estimates that it could "run out of money in November". The Prime Minister said it would be "judicious" for the UN to go bust and "warned it "must not be allowed to grind to a halt".

He urged Asian countries to back EU proposals for tough penalties on non-payers, to accelerate the payment of arrears and reform contributions to take account of the relative wealth of members.

Mr Major, who won strong support from Thailand for his call for UN reforms, will today call for the liberalisation of Asian markets.

The threat of a walk-out by Indonesia, led by President Suharto, if Portugal used the summit to resume attacks on

human rights abuses in East Timor was averted when the Portuguese Prime Minister, Antonio Guterres, talked informally to the Mr Suharto in the fringes of the summit. The Portuguese leader suggested a resumption of diplomatic contacts between the two countries, which elicited a non-committal response from Mr Suharto.

The Europeans' desire to avoid conflict over human rights reflects the importance attached by the EU to expanding trade relations with the fastest growing economies in the world. Mr Major has repeatedly pointed out that the countries at the summit account for more than half the world's Gross Domestic Product.

Jacques Santer, the EU Commission President, made a plea for Asian countries to accept that the Single European Market "has greatly improved the opportunities for third countries to do business in the European Union".

In thinly disguised appeal to Asian countries to lower barriers to EU exports, he pointed out that 40 per cent of imports of manufactured goods would be duty-free, while tariffs on other products would be cut by a third in the next decade.

Sir Leon urged Peking to stop restricting the free flow of economic information through overseas news agencies, saying it violated the WTO principles.

He also pressed Li Peng to accept Hong Kong's continued importance as an entrepreneurial centre, and was assured its "capitalism" would survive the handover to China.

Chinese try to calm fears over ill dissident

TERESA POOLE

Peking
Wei Jingsheng, China's most prominent pro-democracy dissident, is in good health apart from hypertension and a "fatty liver", the Chinese government announced yesterday. The unusual medical bulletin on the country's best-known political prisoner followed reports from relatives that Mr Wei, who is 46, was suffering from heart disease, and comes just weeks before China is likely to face attempted censure at the UN Human Rights Commission in Geneva.

Last November, the closed court trial of Mr Wei had to be halted for nearly half an hour when he suffered an attack of high blood pressure. The judges later sentenced him to 14 years for attempting to overthrow the government, and since January he has been kept in solitary confinement at the Nanpu

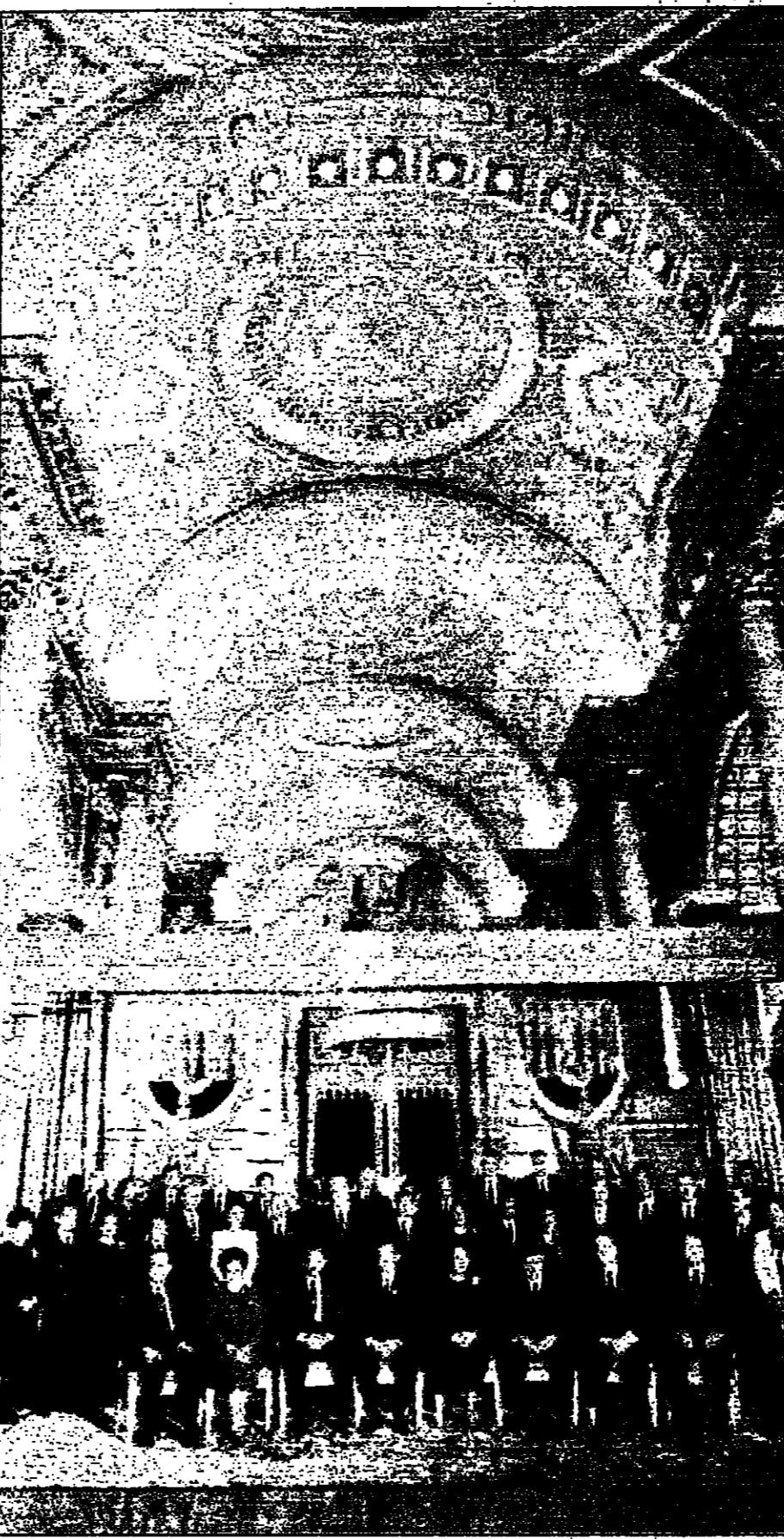
saltworks about three hours' drive from Peking, occupying the same cell in which he spent the latter part of his earlier 14-year jail term. Since March 1979, Mr Wei has spent only six months out of prison.

Support is growing around the world for Mr Wei's nomination for this year's Nobel Peace Prize. Yesterday, 110 British MPs from all parties signed a Commons motion calling for his immediate release from prison and backing the Nobel nomination. He was also nominated in 1995.

The Xinhua news agency announced yesterday that Mr Wei had been given a thorough physical examination, including an electrocardiogram and 24-hour monitoring which had ruled out heart disease. "The prison hospital has treated Wei Jingsheng's diseases and he is now in a healthy condition," Xinhua said.

Meanwhile, new legislation was yesterday passed into law, specifying that martial law may be declared in the case of serious threats to national unity.

Analysts said the Chinese government wanted the law on the statute books before the death of 91-year-old Deng Xiaoping in case of public unrest after the paramount leader passes away.



Glittering assembly: Heads of government gathered for an official photograph in a throne-room of the King of Thailand's palace

Photograph: Kamimasa Mayama/Reuters

international

Howard set for close win in Australia

ROBERT MILLIKEN

Sydney

Voters may be fed up with the Labor government, convinced it has run out of ideas and turned off by what they perceive as Mr Keating's arrogance. But the government is not swamped by scandal or smelting of decay.

Mr Howard is making his second bid to become prime minister, after failing to dislodge Labor under Bob Hawke in 1987. If Mr Howard has a vision for Australia in the next millennium, he has failed to convey it during the campaign. That explains the grudging endorsement of the coalition in the latest opinion polls yesterday.

As his strategists delivered the results of private party polls, which predicted that the conservative Liberals and their junior coalition partners, the National Party, would pick up more than the seven seats they need to topple Labor, Mr Howard displayed the solemn air of a leader who sensed that the elusive prize which he has pursued for 22 years in politics was finally within his grasp.

For his part, Paul Keating, fighting to win an unprecedented sixth term for Labor, ended his campaign the way he began it, as the underdog. Not for him the radio and television studios of Sydney, from where Mr Howard disseminated his message that Labor had left Australia with record foreign debt and youth unemployment.

The Prime Minister was in Tasmania yesterday, after spending the last three days flying thousands of miles from Cairns, in north Queensland, to Adelaide, Canberra and Melbourne, shoring up votes in Labor's most vulnerable seats and calling for a fresh mandate to continue economic and social reforms. He asked Australians to compare his vision of a new, "Australian republic, economically engaged in the Asia-Pacific region, with the 'philosophically stranded' coalition. "Did we build a new standard, have we created a change?" he asked. "Or do we just nod gently off back to sleep again like we did in the Ron Van Winkle years?"

Mr Keating refused to concede the game was up. And, as commentators discovered three years ago, after writing him off under similar circumstances at the last election, he could be right. Australians have rejected incumbent governments only four times since the Second

World War, in 1949, 1972, 1975 and 1983.

Voters may be fed up with the Labor government, convinced it has run out of ideas and turned off by what they perceive as Mr Keating's arrogance. But the government is not swamped by scandal or smelting of decay.

Mr Howard is making his second bid to become prime minister, after failing to dislodge Labor under Bob Hawke in 1987. If Mr Howard has a vision for Australia in the next millennium, he has failed to convey it during the campaign. That explains the grudging endorsement of the coalition in the latest opinion polls yesterday.

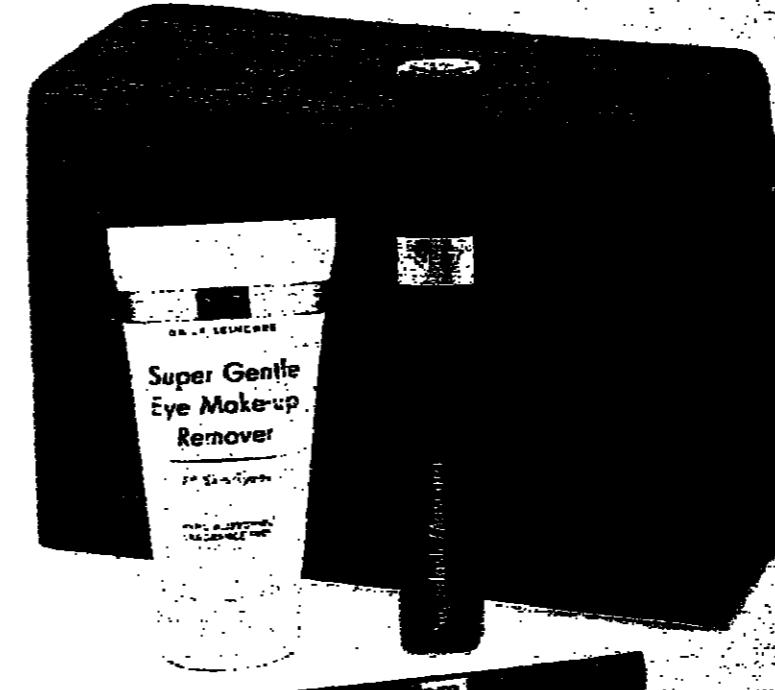
Having started the campaign five weeks ago, during the coalition's 11-point lead, Labor closed the gap in the three main polls to finish two, three and six points behind, respectively. A nationwide poll published in a Brisbane newspaper yesterday gave Labor a one-point lead, the first poll to put Labor ahead. Mr Keating maintained a lead over Mr Howard as preferred prime minister in most polls.

On election eve, it was difficult to measure the impact of the "forged-letters affair", a sensational development on Wednesday in which a senior Labor minister released letters apparently damaging to the coalition, but which later turned out to be fakes. The Labor Party yesterday issued a statement to federal police investigating the affair, claiming the letters originated in Liberal Party ranks. Liberals accused Labor staff of forging them.

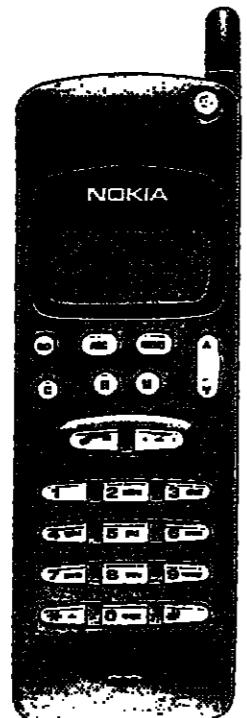
Three of Australia's leading newspapers, the *Sydney Morning Herald*, the *Age*, of Melbourne, and the *Australian Financial Review*, called for a coalition victory yesterday. But two influential newspapers owned by Rupert Murdoch went against the grain. The *Australian*, his national flagship, declined to endorse either side while the *Daily Telegraph*, a mass-circulation Sydney tabloid, backed Mr Keating.

While most papers splashed headlines that predicted Mr Keating's defeat, the Murdoch papers provided upbeat coverage of the final hours of Mr Keating's campaign.

Free at Boots



LIMITED OFFER
£9.99
INC. VAT



NOKIA
GSM MODEL 2010.

- ◆ 99 name/number memory
- ◆ 100 mins talk-time
- ◆ 30 hrs standby-time
- ◆ Complete with standard battery and rapid travel charger
- ◆ Weight approx 320g

FREE IN-CAR ADAPTOR/CHARGER
FREE SPARE BATTERY
FREE LEATHER CASE
TOGETHER WORTH OVER £75

GUARANTEED PEACE OF MIND
Your phone is covered by our 14 days
no quibble money back promise

Cellphones

ORDER NOW FOR FREE DELIVERY IN 4 WORKING DAYS

FREEPHONE 0800 000 888

CREDIT CARD ORDERING HOTLINE WEEKDAYS 8AM TO 7PM WEEKENDS 9AM TO 5PM

PLEASE NAME YOUR CREDIT CARD AND THIS ADVERTISEMENT NUMBER WHEN YOU CALL
AND QUOTE REF 3001 (SOMEONE WE ARE UNABLE TO ACCEPT CREDIT CARDS)

Offer subject to 1000 units and a standard service contract for each phone with Cellphones Direct Ltd, 125 Lower Richmond Road, Richmond upon Thames, TW9 1JU. Offer valid from 21st February to 19th March 1996. Full terms and conditions are available on request. For full details and terms and conditions of the offer see website or in-store.

© Cellphones Direct Ltd 1996. Registered in England No. 3306424

Free Cosmetic Bag with every two N°7 purchases.

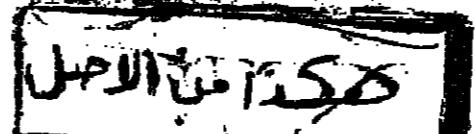
Cosmetic Bag contains Superlash Mascara Brown/Black, Precision Brow Definer Brown/Black and Super Gentle Eye Make-up Remover 30ml.

N°7



Someone Cares

Offer available in most Boots stores from 21st February until 19th March 1996.
Subject to availability.



books

All you need to know about the books you meant to read

by Gavin Griffiths

THE SUN ALSO RISES (1926)
by Ernest Hemingway

Also known as: *Fiesta*.
the title under which the novel was published in England

Plot: Jake Barnes, an American journalist, has been emasculated by a mysterious injury sustained in the First World War. In tones of savage stoicism, he narrates details of his life in the Twenties amid an idle group of sybaritic expatriates who swear about the cafés and bars of Paris. They chatter, drink too much and brawl.

Jake's frustration centres on his love for Lady Brett Ashley. She returns his affection but seeks sexual gratification elsewhere. For fun and money, she decides to marry the bullish Mike, upsetting yet another suitor, Robert Cohn, who is both aggressive and wheedling by turns. This discordant quartet becomes increasingly raucous until they drift to Spain for a holiday.

Jake evades the wasteland of his personal existence by mixing with peasants and fishing for trout. He is also an *aficionado* of bull fighting, the unsporting ritual which comes to represent Man under pressure, pushed to the limits of concentration and courage.

Meanwhile, Brett is after Pedro the matador. But before she can nail his *ejaculations* to the bedpost, Pedro makes a tactical (if tactless) exit. Cohn turns violent; Jake runs away to the seaside...

Brett contacts Jake and they meet in Madrid. She believes that only Jake's little physical problem prevents their love from flowering. The novel closes with Jake's dry response: "Isn't it pretty to think so?"

Theme: An attempt to find value and meaning in



A bearded prophet of the wilderness

Michael Coveney's biography of the director Mike Leigh sent John Campbell scuttling back to the video shop

The World According to Mike Leigh
by Michael Coveney, HarperCollins, £18

F uniqueness is the mark of an enduring artist. Mike Leigh passes the test. There is no one like him. No other playwright or film director – certainly in Britain – does what he does. He developed his own method early on and has stuck to it tenaciously for 30 years, from his first staged experiments on the Sixties fringe through television breakthrough in the Seventies with *Nuts in May* and *Abigail's Party* to international recognition as an independent, prize-winning and even bankable film maker (*High Hopes*, *Life Is Sweet*, *Naked*) in the late Eighties. His integrity commands respect even if you question the results.

His method is often described as "improvisation". But this is misleading. It suggests something serendipitous and uncontrolled, whereas in fact all Leigh's finished work is very tightly structured. Nothing is improvised on stage or camera. The improvisation comes much earlier, when he and his actors together create the characters whose interaction will form the story of the play or film. Leigh does this individually with each actor, building a complete character through traits of personality, language, clothes and lifestyle before introducing them to one another. Thus events and dialogue are sparked by the collision of autonomous characters instead of being given to the actors in advance by an omniscient author. Other directors use improvisation to explore and deepen actors' understanding of their roles: no one else starts with it. But the point is that Leigh, starting with nothing, ends up with a precisely detailed script. His credits used to say "devised and directed by Mike Leigh"; they now read "written and directed".

Of course, he is not quite *sui generis*. His method was influenced by people like Peter Brook and Ken Campbell. Paradoxically his finished product comes closest to Pinter, whose resonant sounding of the hollow poetry of banality is honed in the study, not the



Mike Leigh with his director of photography, Roger Pratt (left), during the filming of *High Hopes*

Photograph: Ronald Grant Archive

rehearsal room. Michael Coveney draws other comparisons, with Ben Jonson's comedy of "humours" and with Ayckbourn. But like him or loathe him – and you can loathe him either for creating patronising caricatures or reproducing the sheer tedium of ordinariness – Leigh is a true original. It is a pity his name does not lend itself to an adjective like "Pinteresque".

His surname, Coveney reveals, was actually changed from Liebermann. His grandparents on both sides were part of that fruitful influx of Jewish emigrants from Russia that so alarmed the Tory Government of the day that it passed the 1902 Aliens Act to keep them out. Leigh rejected his Jewish inheritance as soon as he could; but Coveney has no doubt that it

helped shape him. He grew up as part of the large, prosperous and self-confident Jewish community in Manchester, bourgeois but still outsiders. His interest in human oddity was stimulated by the extensive tribe of his bizarre relations. He disappointed his parents – both doctors – by failing to get into Manchester Grammar. Salford, however, more working-class and much less academic – suited him better. He played the lead school productions of *Gogol and Shaw*, and remembers reading *Look Back in Anger* in the school library in 1956. He was 13, and had found his métier. Four years later he won Rada scholarship.

The breadth of subsidised opportunity open to that privileged generation is brought home by Coveney's account of Leigh's first five years after leaving school.

Between 1960 and 1965 he "not only studied at Rada but worked as an assistant stage manager in repertory, acted in films and on television, took a foundation year course at Camberwell Arts School while attending evening classes at the London School of Film Technique... and spent a year in the theatre design department of the Central School of Art and Design". He created his first play while employed at the Midland Arts Centre in Birmingham; and, in 1967, he landed a job as an assistant director with the RSC.

His face – or rather his methods – did not fit and he was quickly sacked. The next few years were his most difficult, struggling for the chance to devise shows in colleges and fringe venues like the Open Space and Traverse. It was a piece

at the Open Space in 1970 – the excruciating, *Chekhovian Bleak Moments* – which marked his breakthrough. Albert Finney – another Salford boy – put up £17,000 to make it into a film. Then Tony Garnett, exercising an artistic freedom unimaginable today, gave him a slot to make *Hard Labour* for the BBC, and he was away.

Coveney's is not a great book: his idea of criticism is more to berate Leigh's detractors – Dennis Potter, David Edgar, Julie Burchill, Pauline Kael – than to offer much interpretation of his own. But his account of Leigh's now very substantial œuvre – some 37 films and theatre pieces, climaxing in the grimly Dostoyevskian *Naked* (1993) – is clear and helpful. It certainly sent me back to the video shop.

Marriage: a health warning

Michael Arditti on a young gay writer's acute portrait of a heterosexual couple

The focus of Dale Peck's debut novel, *Fucking Martin*, may have lain on the titular verb, but almost as crucial was the narrator's relationship with his parents, Henry and Beatrice. And yet, by dint of the novel's subjunctive mode, with the family dramas and sexual encounters being reviewed from different perspectives, the characters had little chance to develop and Henry and Beatrice remained particularly sketchy. Their more detailed portraits are the subject of Peck's second book.

It is brave of a young writer best known for his gay writing to tackle a marriage. As with *Fucking Martin*, Peck's structure is experimental. In alternate – yet contemporaneous – chapters, he portrays the young Henry and Beatrice through their early marriage and the old Hank and Bea. 40

The Law of Enclosures
by Dale Peck
Chatto and Windus, £15.99

years on, when their love is as diminished as their Christian names.

Peck movingly depicts the misfit match between Beatrice, recently released from domestic drudgery and Henry under sentence of death from a brain tumour that is wrongly rumoured to be AIDS. After Henry's successful surgery, they marry, drop out of college, take routine jobs and find temporary solace in drink and adultery. The stages of their decline, while not detailed in the narrative, are made implicit in their subsequent despair and

in Bea's honest but horrific: "Oh, Hank. You should have just died." In later years, their children refuse to visit them, and their closest relationship is with another unhappy couple, Stan and Myra. After Stan dies, Hank decides that they should move north and build a house next to Myra's trailer. When the house is built, to specifications that are clearly symbolic rather than practical, Henry and Beatrice (for their names have reverted), experience a rebirth of love.

Peck displays remarkable empathy with his elderly protagonists. Myra laments that, "We're the last generation to have long meaningless marriages. Wives waiting for their husbands to die, husbands waiting for their wives to die", and the book is shot through with the spiritual souring of loveless relationships. The moment of

Henry and Beatrice's sexual renewal is handled with great grace. The trouble is that much of the writing is stuck in a state of stasis. Once the spring/autumn contrast becomes clear, as it does very quickly, the novel goes nowhere. The structure sets up a series of simple juxtapositions, while the almost exclusive concentration on Henry and Beatrice is not justified by their intrinsic interest. Peck rises skilfully to the emotional heights, but fails to make the mundane compelling.

The decision to portray both past and present events as contemporaneous is equally restricting. Henry and Beatrice are removed from history. Nothing shapes them beyond the domestic world of their marriage. Nothing wider can shape them because time and place in any meaningful sense do not exist. Peck himself seems

aware of the problem when he makes Hank's mother reply to Bea's "This is the Nineties" with "This is not the Nineties, Bea. This is Long Island"; but merely setting it in a backwater does not fill the void.

By far the finest writing comes when Peck abandons his narrative in favour of a memoir of his own parents. The precise purpose of this section in the overall scheme – whether it is to emphasise the fictional nature of the rest or to show how the rows between Peck's father and his four wives feed into the portrayal of Hank and Bea – is unclear. Nevertheless, in his description of his mother's early death and the stories he made up to cope with it, Peck writes with an intensity and commitment lacking elsewhere. Ultimately, it is the author's story, not his fiction, that captures the reader's heart.

Audiobooks

This Sceptred Isle
read by Anna Massey and Paul Eddington
Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire
read: Philip Madoc and Neville Jason

Now that heroes are back in force, history is high fashion. But Anna Massey, the anchorwoman on Radio 4's *This Sceptred Isle* (BBC, 3hrs, £9.99), sounds too like Joyce Grenfell in a primary school; she is not helped by a script of unutterable banality. The extracts from Winston Churchill's *History of the English-Speaking People* are predictably better phrased, although the late Paul Eddington's reading of them is sadly lacklustre.

But Philip Madoc's splendid voice, full of importance, makes Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire* (Naxos, 8hrs, £12.49) quite mesmerising: like driving through history in a Rolls-Royce. It is also a timely reminder of the brilliance of its legendary author. Gibbon can analyse character, tell a love story, and describe practicalities with the same matchless lucidity.

Christina Hardymont

Sometimes the best nightmares are old-fashioned ones

Post-modernism is all very well, says Geoff Dyer, but you can't beat a thrilling tale well told

Hallucinating Foucault
by Patricia Duncker
Serpent's Tail, £8.99

elist, Paul Michel. He's content beavering and footnoting away in the library until he begins an affair with another graduate student, a bony, myopic, DM-wearing Germanist whose thick glasses – this detail proves crucial to the novel's symbolic scheme – give her the look of an owl. Yes, not my cup of tea either, but she blows apart the narrator's ideas of dispassionate, scholarly scrutiny of the texts.

Michel, she reveals is mad, and for the last 25 years has been

banged up in asylums in France. Goaded by his lover's intellectual passion, the narrator pledges himself to go to France, not just to find out what has happened to Michel in the intervening years but, also, if possible, to free him.

In doing so, he embraces the challenge set out by Foucault in the Preface to *The Archaeology of Knowledge*: "There are times in life when the question of knowing it one can think differently than one thinks and perceive differently than one sees is absolutely necessary if one is to go looking and reflecting at all." When he gets to the asylum where Michel is confined, the novel moves deep into Foucaultian territory, into themes of "madness, death, sexuality and crime" that attracted *le grand*

philosophie. These were Michel's themes, too, and the books of the two writers constitute – it is claimed – a trans-generic dialogue, a series of mutually explicating, explicit yet allusive love letters.

We don't come face to face with Michel until past the novel's halfway point. Up until then we follow an archival trail that yields glimpses of his writing. Technically, Duncker thereby sets herself the problem directors have when making films about great imaginary artists: producing samples of work that live up to the myth created by the fiction. Michel's prose was "ironic, disengaged, detached", and the bits and pieces we see are enough to persuade us, just, that their (alleged) author was capable of writing the books on which his

notoriety rests. Duncker succeeds in doing this partly through the contrast with the narrator's voice which, at times, suffers from the unengaging wobbliness befitting a 13-year-old graduate student. Early on, he nearly has a "brain haemorrhage with jealousy"; in Paris the streets stink of "Gauloises and urine"; later, he smokes so much that his mouth tastes "like an ashtray".

At this stage one is willing to give Duncker the benefit of the doubt, for an even more difficult seat is still to come: that of making the real-life – ie fictive – Michel live up to expectations. The suspense feels somewhat narrator-confived, narrator-led: to make sure we are excited about the forthcoming encounter, the nar-

rator is always telling us that he is "terrified", "seething", "shaking, his skin tingling". One is reminded of Leavis's point about Conrad over-doing the atmospherics on the way to the meeting with Kurtz. In Duncker's case, the anxiety and suspense felt by the reader is more far-reaching than the author intended: what we are also wondering is: will she pull it off?

She does. Michel crackles with electricity. The air hums around this compound and distillation of Artaud-Genet. The reader falls for his warped tenderness, his perverse sinfulness. In his every move there is a latent propensity for violence, a memory and premonition of "madness or despair". That was what Marlow said of Kurtz, of course, but Michel has inhabited

NEW AUTHORS

PUBLISH YOUR WORK
ALL SUBJECTS CONSIDERED
Fiction, Non-Fiction, Essays, Poetry, Children's
AUTHORS WORLDWIDE INVITED
WRITE OR SEND YOUR MANUSCRIPT TO
MINERVA PRESS
2 OLD BROMPTON RD, LONDON SW3 3DO

Too much cloak, not enough dagger

Andrew Lownie finds fault with an espionage anthology

The Oxford Book of Spy Stories, edited by Michael Cox, OUP £17.99

In one of the stories in *The Oxford Book of Spy Stories*, the interrogator describes espionage as a "game invented by the English during the Napoleonic Wars... they have learned to play it with gentle but consummate skill." Just as our Intelligence Services are among the best in the world, so too are our spy writers, which may explain the popularity of spy anthologies in this country. There have been some two dozen over the last 50 years with editors of the distinction of Eric Ambler and Graham Greene. Now Michael Cox, who has produced some excellent anthologies of detective and ghost stories, does his bit with these 28 stories published over the last 100 years.

He has a difficult task. Like one of Henry VIII's wives, one's responsibility is known, the problem is how to make it seem different. How does one breathe new life into an old form? He has compounded his difficulties by electing to include only short stories rather than brief extracts from spy novels.

A fiction anthology should not merely be a random collection of stories. It needs to have a point of view, and the basis on which the selection has been made needs to be made clear. This is not readily apparent from Cox's introduction, which gives a lucid account of the origins and growth of spy fiction but only addresses his selection in passing.

He claims his choice constitutes the best spy stories, but, as Mandy Rice-Davies remarked on another occasion, "He would wouldn't he?" No, what he has done is provide a little of everything. There are much-anthologised stories such as Valentine Williams' "The Pigeon Man" and Ambrose Bierce's "Parker Adderson, Philosopher"; there is an example of the cross-fertilisation of the genre with Robert Sheekley's futuristic "Citizen in Space", and there are stories from writers not usually associated with the genre, like Sir Arthur Quiller-Couch, WE Johns and John Galsworthy.

The usual suspects are also here – William Le Queux, AEW Mason, Edgar Wallace, Eric Ambler, Len Deighton, Ted Allbeury – though not always with their best-known, or indeed their best, work. Personally, I would have chosen John Buchan's more overtly espionage tales "The Loathly Opposite" or "Dr

Lartius" rather than the unremarkable Jacobite story "The Lit Chamber".

That said, his eschewing of the well-known for the less familiar often works. One of Somerset Maugham's Ashenden stories had to be included, not least to mark the transition from the romantic to the realist tradition of spy fiction, the move from the spy as patriot to spy as disillusioned romantic. Rather than the more obvious "The Traitor" or "Mr Harrington Waiting", Cox has chosen the far superior "Giulio Lazzaro".

There will be questionable inclusions or omissions in any anthology, and that is emphatically the case here. Given this is an Oxford book, perhaps Cox should have included more literary writers working in the genre such as O Henry, Guy de Maupassant, Mark Twain and Charles Kingsley. The balance too seems strange. Over half the stories come from between the wars, with only one tale, "Risico" – possibly Ian Fleming's most self-indulgent tale – marking the Cold War's three most important decades. Also, just one woman is represented – Baroness Orczy – and only four foreigners.

John Le Carré's importance is noted in the introduction but not reflected in the text. Perhaps copyright clearance was too high, but surely one of the stories from *The Secret Pigeon* should be here? Other omissions to my mind include Sapper, Peter O'Donnell (why not a Modesty Blaise tale from *Pieces of Modernity*) and an example drawn from the rich vein of comic spy writing, Cyril Connolly's "Bond Strikes Camp" comes to mind. Spying may be a serious business but spy fiction is not.

All the same, this is a stimulating collection with some gems, such as AD Divine's "Flood on the Goodwin" and Len Deighton's "Paper Casualty". Cox shows himself again to be a diligent and imaginative anthologist. But the fact remains that just too few spy short stories are being written or published. If the task of the future spy anthologist is to be made easier, magazine editors need to give thought to encouraging the genre. For, as a 1994 Edward Hoch tale – loosely based on the Aldrich Ames case – shows here, they continue, even with the end of the Cold War, both to reflect and shape contemporary history.

Paperbacks

Reviewed by Emma Hagestadt and Christopher Hirst



The Five Giants
by Nicholas Timmins
(Penguin, £5.99)

Her mother is mad, her father is dead, and her sister is a civil servant with a weakness for furri hats. Hazel has no one to turn to when she discovers her gynaecologist husband is using her womb as a genetic test site. A reproductive satire Fay Weldon would be proud to have mothered:



A Thousand Miles from Nowhere
by Graham Coster (Penguin, £5.99)

Coster caged lifts with big rigs, hauling lots to Moscow and vehicle parts across the US. Keen-eyed and witty, his work deserves to reach readers far beyond the truck-stop. It's particularly good on the "driving and diving" required to attain transcontinental destinations despite manifold obstacles. In Connecticut, for example, the law demands white sheets for cab beds.



Real Life
by Marsha Hunt
(Flamingo, £6.99)

It was the English rain that made Marsha Hunt famous: it fluffed up her curly to thrice normal size, landing her a part in *Harry*. Her engaging autobiography includes memories of groovy days in Berkeley and Notting Hill, and a less flattering portrait of Mick Jagger (spots and all). A "Spade Chick" with attitude.



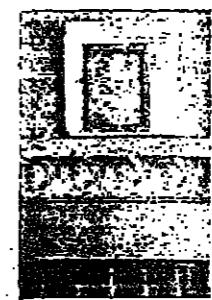
A Stranger in the Family
by Terry Sanders
(Other Way Press, £9.95)

Increased heart beats, hot flushes, shaky legs, nausea and helpless crying. Not the onset of the menopause, but a mother's reaction on learning that her child is gay. Straightforward advice on the etiquette of closeting, including the reassuring message that a little suffering is good for you.



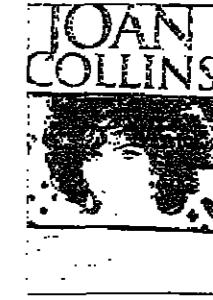
The Chess Garden
by Brook Hansen
(Sceptre, £5.99)

Gorged on cucumber pickles, the children of Dayton, Ohio gather after school to hear Dr Uterhoven's letters home, in which he writes of a land lived in by chess pieces and origami cranes. This turn-of-the-century fable is at times so rich, it gives you heartburn. He's either brilliant or barking.



Too Damn Famous
by Joan Collins
(Orion, £5.99)

Katherine Bennett, America's glitziest soap star, emerges triumphant from an LA courtroom to face the press. Then it's home to boiled eggs and toast, and a Mexican maid who can't even fix the air-conditioning. After all the fuss, it's good to know Joanie can write – especially about herself.



The Death of Artyon Senna
by Richard Williams
(Penguin, £5.99)

A well-crafted assessment of the man who "turned grand prix racing into a contact sport". Complex and utterly competitive, Senna was a committed Christian who "needed to go as fast as possible all the time". Williams likens his approach to musical improv, quoting one jazz-man on the need to "keep to the unknown". The crash stays a mystery, but Williams lurches on a few of racing's dark secrets.

T: 0171 293 2222

classified • personal

Independent Hearts

Replies should be addressed to the relevant box number,
c/o The Independent, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL

Fax: 0171 293 2505

PhotoPartners
The Visual Introduction Agency
for everyone...everywhere.
FreeCall 0500 824355 (24hrs)
for Information Pack
FREEPOST SB801 - Western Garden City - Hemel - AL7 3BR

Dateline
"The U.K.'s largest
agency."
The INDEPENDENT
For free details in absolute
confidence, Dept N, Dateline,
23 Abingdon Rd, London W3 7AL
(01869) 324 100

**Starlight
Introductions
Limited**
A professional
introduction agency,
providing a confidential
service for romance or
friendship, regardless of
status or sexual
preference.
For a no obligation
welcome pack
telephone 0181 786 5828
or write to P.O. Box 16,
Epsom, Surrey
KT19 0YT

**THE DATING
BUREAU**
0891 444 089
For both men & women

INSTANT DREAM DATES
EXCHANGE OF
PRIVATE MEMBERS
CLUBS
0891 444 089

**Place your
advertisement in
INDEPENDENT HEARTS**
The Independent Way to Meet New People

By placing an advertisement in The Independent Hearts section of *The Independent* and the *Independent on Sunday* you will immediately be in contact with over 1,66 million readers. The cost for your advertisement, published in the first available editions of the Saturday "Weekend" and Sunday "Real Life" sections is just £5.00 per line including V.A.T. (Box No. is an additional £1.00, please cross here if you do not require a Box No.).
Simply write your advertisement in the spaces below and fill in the coupon – Minimum 2 lines (N.B. A character is a letter, a number, a punctuation mark and a space between words)

Name:
Address:
Telephone (daytime):
Signature:
All advertisements must be typed. Charges should be made payable to Newspaper Publishing Pte or debit card.
 Access Visa Amex Diners Club card expiry date:
Card no:
Send all advertisements to:
Independent Hearts, The Independent, 19th Floor, 1 Canada Square, Canary Wharf, London E14 5DL
Telephone: 0171 293 2347 Fax: 0171 293 2505

This offer is only open to private advertisers. Trade enquiries are welcome on the above telephone number.
*NRS Jan - June '95

drawing down the moon
THE THINKING PERSON'S INTRODUCTION AGENCY
"the agency people rave about"
COSMOPOLITAN

Adam & Eve Mews, Kensington
0171 937 6263

**DO YOU BELIEVE IN
LIFE AFTER DEATH?**
We do. Kidney research saves lives.
So do legacies. Phone 01480 454828
NATIONAL
KIDNEY
RESEARCH FUND

3 Archers Court, Shobley Road, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire PE19 8XG Registered Charity No. 252002

the Phone Cafe
INSTANT CONNECTIONS
UP TO 45 WOMEN
LIVE ON LINE
0891 70 8057

Newspaper Publishing plc
requests that
Commercial Organisations
do not send material
to our
Private Advertisers

**ARE YOU
LOOKING
FOR THAT
SPECIAL SOMEONE?**
We have a wide range of
members in and around
London and the Midlands, for
a discreet and caring service
Tel: 0181 896 1228

SIGNIFICANT OTHERS International
agency. The intelligent choice
for gay men. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

THE DINNER CLUB (Est. '88). The
members are countywide dining
clubs. Tel: 0171 338 4450. For
short business dinners and
social business dinners aged 28+
Tel: 01844 350257. Business
opportunities also available.

**NOTICE TO
READERS**
The Independent
guarantees that
respondents will receive
a reply when answering
advertisements on this
page, although we hope
that as a matter of
courtesy they will.
When making contact with people for the first
time it is advisable to
meet in a public place
and let a member of
your family or trusted
friend know where you
will be.
We would advise readers
and advertisers to
exercise caution when
giving out personal
details. This will be
respected by genuine
respondents.

PLUMP PARTNERS, National dating
agency. If you are plump or prefer
a plump partner ring 0152 715908.

HOME & TRAVEL PARTNERS, New friends
overseas. Call
the Worldwide introductions Ltd
Ed. 01205 750404 Fax 791477

"FRESHFIELDS"
The Discreet Introduction Agency for
Gays & Lesbians.
Whether You Are Looking for a
One to One Relationship or
New Friends & Acquaintances
For Further Information, please
call 0171 394 5756

Sara Eden
London
0171 962 626
Worthing
01753 320350
(Both 24 Hours)

Zygosis the bringing together...
THE PROFESSIONAL PERSON'S INTRODUCTION AGENCY
Promised people don't meet their partner in real life
This is where Zygosis can help.
We are a discreet, confidential
organisation, results
are known to all.

LONDON SCOTLAND NORTH WEST NORTH EAST
0171 409 7779 0131 336 5635 0191 261 2234
YORKSHIRE MIDLANDS SOUTH WEST SOUTH EAST
0113 245 0776 0941 438 5141 01623 91200

AMERICAN BUSINESSMAN who
has to travel seeks intelligent, per-
sonable, attractive, petite stable
European lady 21-35 and friend-
ly. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

CHEERFUL GAY PROFESSIONAL 35, London, male. Seeks
a gay partner. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

PROFESSIONAL BUSINESSMAN AGE 55 wishes to meet sincere
female friend/marriage. Box No. 1161

CHEERFUL AFTER NOONIE 42, male. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

PROFESSIONAL BUSINESSMAN 42, male. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

ATTRACTIVE GAY PROFESSIONAL 40, London, male. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

SPECIAL AGENT KESTREL, 28, male. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

THE SURREY ELITE CLUB Club for
discreet, intelligent, attractive
men. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

CONNECT TWO - GENTLEMEN 40
ladies need to meet for Christian &
general introductions. Tel: 01299
814481.

AVON WILTS GLOS amzing educated
gentleman 50-65 are invited to
join our discreet, friendly, travel
seminar. Tel: 01225 820000.

IN ATTACHED PROFESSIONAL 42, male.
Tel: 0171 338 4450.

UNIVERSITY LECTURER DARM-
stadt, 30, seeks lady for long term
engagement. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

VALENTINE CARDY 42, mother.

MAN 39 seeks lady for long term
engagement. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

VALS 42, male. Tel: 0171 338 4450.

gardening

And hummingbirds flicker by tall, white foxgloves

Ecuador is plant-lovers heaven. By Anna Pavord

I have found myself in company with some pretty besotted plants-men over the last couple of years, but no fern fetishist, no orchid ogler I have ever known can match the intensity of the birdwatchers we fetched up with recently in Ecuador. Up at 5am, breakfasted by 5.30, out all day with field glasses clamped to their eyeballs, back at nightfall, a snitch of supper, then out on to the balconies of their bamboo huts to send pre-recorded owl noises into the jungle dark. "Eighty today," confided one bright birder at supper. I thought he meant the temperature, but it was the number of new species he had knocked off his list that day.

We soon discovered, though, that in this particular place, a jungle lodge down the Rio Napo, to go out with a birder was the best way of guaranteeing a good walk. They are indefatigable in the distances they will travel to bag a new bird: they are quiet and touchingly generous in their efforts to convert you to the cause.

I like birds, but as I tried to explain to one young American attorney, there isn't enough room in one life for plants, let alone anything else. He looked at me pityingly. We happened to be out with him when he saw his bird of birds, the cocha ant shrike. The female, he had told us, was described only from a skin, the male, unknown. When we came upon them, male and female were both sitting on a branch in full view, singing, prancing about, and generally drawing attention to themselves in as shameless a way as possible. The attorney was beside himself with excitement, trembling so much he nearly upset the little dugout canoe we were in at the time. "You don't realise how lucky you are," he said breathlessly. "Nobody's ever seen this before." I tried to look pleased and excited, but the cocha ant shrike is a little black job awfully like masses of other little blackish things flitting about out there. I realised then what it must be like for non-gardeners to listen to enthusiastic boring on about the joys of *Saxifraga fedderici-augusti*. To them, it's just another little green job.

The attorney was oblivious to everything except birds. "Wonderful heliconias," I said one day, as we tightroped our way over a tree-trunk bridge. "What?" he said and I pointed out the huge brilliant red and yellow flowers hanging like lanterns in the dark greenery around us. "Oh yeah!" he said. "Haven't seen them before," although we had been walking past them every day. Butterflies did penetrate his consciousness, presumably on the basis that they looked more like birds than anything else around. The king-fisher-coloured blue morphos were spectacular, flapping their wings so slowly it seemed impossible that they could stay airborne.

Birds and flowers came together most spectacularly at Cusin, a 17th-century hacienda in the northern Andes, by far the best of the three

places we stayed at in Ecuador. Wandering through the archway into the courtyard entrance, you have a curious sensation of a never-never land. Hydrangeas are blooming with orchids. By the hydrangea is a fat banana palm. And sipping from the speckled flowers of tall white foxgloves are flickering, iridescent hummingbirds.

They have been very quick on the uptake. Cusin was bought, only six years ago, by an Englishman, Nick Millhouse, who introduced many cottage garden flowers among the agaves, avocado trees and eucalyptus that he found there. Although there is probably not another foxglove within a thousand miles of Cusin, the hummingbirds flit in for their drinks there with all the easy familiarity of a hack at Groucho's. I commented on the hummingbirds to the manager, Marcia. "Oh," she said, surprised. "Don't you have hummingbirds in England?" If only. I'd certainly trade them for the sparrows that are once again stripping the wisteria of flower buds.

Cusin, about an hour and a half's bus ride north of the airport in Quito is at San Pablo, which ranges around the eastern shore of a lake of the same name. All round are the peaks of the Andes and every day the view was different, for the clouds swirled endlessly round the mountains in a celestial version of the dance of the seven veils. Sometimes one of the mountains would let the clouds slip to reveal a vast peak, shining with snow and then quickly spin the gauzy cloud round itself again to cover itself up. It was a riveting show.

Agaves and eucalyptus were the dominant plants of the landscape here, the eucalyptus introduced and aggressive enough to see off most of the indigenous trees. But walking out from Cusin in big circular loops round the ridges and valleys, you came across masses of plants growing wild that we cultivate as garden plants. Orange-flowered *acremocarpus* scrambled through the hedgerows like honeysuckle. Unimproved pale mauve verbena crept along sandy banks, salbias grew everywhere. In grassland, where we might expect dandelions, there was tickseed (*coreopsis*) and Spanish daisy.

Fields of maize grew on even the most precipitous slopes, carefully ridged and furrowed to husband the water. When the sweetcorn was well established, the farmers sowed runner beans alongside them, so that the beans could use the sweetcorn as supports. I have combined peas and broad beans in this way, which works well as long as you choose a tall-growing cultivar of broad bean. This summer I am going to try the Ecuadorian way with runners.

Everywhere you noticed cultivation techniques that reflected a care for water as a resource. We are gradually understanding about the importance of mulching here, but we don't do very much by way of ridging and furrowing



Ecuadorian jungle (above); and on the flower-strewn hacienda at Cusin. Photos: Tony Morrison/Anna Pavord

between crops or building little earth stockades round plants of tomato or squash or courgette. We buy sprinkler systems instead and spray expensively filtered drinking water all over the garden. Back to the mattock, the tool that was most often in evidence in Ecuador. It's a bit like a spade, mounted at right angles to a long handle. You can chop up clods of earth with it and use it to draw soil up around plants. I inherited a whole family of them from a great uncle, but have never used them. Having seen how deftly Ecuadorians handle them, I feel they ought to be brought back into commission.

Cut flowers seem to be the boom business at the moment. The *hastaria* we stayed in to the south of Quito was completely hemmed in by acres and acres of phytolacca tunnel, all growing roses. While sulphur cones burn away inside the shelters, young women, without face masks or any other protection, were picking the unrealistically perfect blooms, each on a three foot stem. It put me

off roses as a cut flower in a big way. As many birders go to Ecuador for the cocha ant shrike or the harpy eagle, so many planters go there for the orchids. Late summer is the best time for these, but even so, in winter we saw four or five different kinds. In the jungle were epidendrums and a dear little oncidium with a monkey face. In the mountains behind Cusin, growing on a rock face where they were drenched by the spray from a 100ft waterfall, were showers of wonderful red-flowered orchids. What were they? I haven't the faintest idea.

When I inquired of one of the birdwatchers in the jungle the name of a brown thing that flashed through my field glasses, he replied grandly, "I don't do flycatchers". So I'll take a leaf from his book and say equally firmly, "I don't do orchids".

The Hacienda Cusin is at San Pablo, Imbabura, Ecuador (06 918013; fax 06 918003).



Why snails love city gardens best

By Diana Ross

The common garden snail, *Helix Aspersa*, was extinguished in the British Isles by the Ice Age. The English Channel opened up and cut us off from the Continent before it had time to make its way back again. But then came the Romans, bringing with them their own supply for culinary purposes. Unfortunately, they did not consume them all. Some escaped, naturalised and thrived. And they thrive best in close proximity to humans. For a snail four things are essential: moisture, food, shelter and alkaline soil for the calcium to make their shells.

A town garden provides these necessities better than anywhere – a food supply in easy reach of the shelter of walls and paving and ideal atmospheric conditions: a small garden is so easy to water. The irony is that the people who provide this ideal environment, are the very same who suffer most from the snail's presence. They even share the same taste in plants: broad-leaved herbaceous perennials.

Any city gardener visiting a country garden cannot fail to notice the relatively pristine condition of plants. There is a better range of predators, but the size and viscosity of a mature garden snail give it strong protection. Then again, in the country it is often too far for the snail to trapse from their shelter to the borders and back before daybreak. And country gardeners are less likely to have an irrigation system.

They do. Hermaphroditic, every mature garden snail reproduces itself approximately 200 times a season. They can live for eight years once mature. Happily, snails are not vigilante parents and leave the offspring to fend for themselves. How

ever, one gardener in Hampshead counted her haul last year – 3,000. If each of those 3,000 had lived to produce its 200 offspring, and if only five per cent of those had reached maturity, by the end of 1998 they would number six million. And if she found 3,000 how did she miss?

Daily vigilance and knowledge of their habitat is probably more useful in dealing with the city snail. Then a decision can be taken on how best to despatch them. Lopping the catch over the wall next door is totally ineffectual: snails are territorial and can travel up to 40 metres a night; by the following morning they will be back. Added to which, the mucus trail grown snails leave acts as an inhibitor to the younger generation. Kill an adult and the next size down start eating themselves silly in the race to take over the vacant patch.

Which they do. Hermaphroditic, every mature garden snail reproduces itself approximately 200 times a season. They can live for eight years once mature. Happily, snails are not vigilante parents and leave the offspring to fend for themselves. How

ever, one gardener in Hampstead took to burying her dead but to bury up to 40 snails a day is, so to speak, quite an undertaking.

Two possible final solutions came from the snail farmer who revealed the friendliness of their natures. His first option he called "gardeners' revenge", which is to say, eat them. But first they must be purged. Two days' starvation in a damp atmosphere in a covered bucket followed by three of feeding (flour or Weetabix) and a further two days' abstinence. Store alive in a warm box until required. Finally, blanch in boiling water and cook in garlic butter.

Should the above solution not appeal, mash up packets of Weetabix and lay trails of the cereal on damp evenings along paths and hard surfaces six inches or so from the flowerbeds. Between 11pm and 1am return with torch, dustpan and brush and sweep everything up again: slugs and snails alike will be heads down in the cereal. Place in covered pail and when convenient re-lease on wasteland at least 40 metres from your garden. Repeat regularly throughout the season.

What should be done about

the

snow

falls

of

February?

Evergreens such as

Choisya

and the low-growing

Ceanothus thyrsiflorus

represents the worst hit in

my garden.

Other friends

are

being

mourning

the loss

of

laelia

and

*hebe*s.

Where

branches

are

attached

only

by

the

skin

of

the

bark,

there

is

no

point

in

delaying.

Cut

them,

finish

off

them

and

get

rid

of

them.

Where

branches

are

split,

as

with

my

choisya

and

ceanothus,

I

shall

leave

them

both

until

they

have

flowered

before

undertaking

major

surgery.

As for lilac, you could take

the

chance

to

rejuvenate

the

bush

by

cutting

the

whole

thing

down

to

about

two

feet.

As for lilac, you could take

the

chance

to

rejuvenate

the

bush

by

cutting

the

whole

thing

down

to

about

There's more to the National Trust than country piles, says the new head man. There's 20 Forthin Road, for a start

By Patricia Cleveland-Peck

"I am at the tiller for the time being, but I'm just one of many," was the modest comment of Martin Drury, who took over as director general of the National Trust at the beginning of the year. "The challenge is to keep the thing on course." However, there are already indications that he will steer this venerable old craft towards her second century with some panache.

It was he who took the innovative step of acquiring the first house connected with a living person – and a pop singer at that, rather than a Duke or retired statesman. Hearing that 20 Forthin Road, Liverpool – the council house where Paul McCartney spent his teenage years – was for sale, Drury felt it was something the Trust should at least consider. "I was taken by several things," he told me. "Firstly it was really a rather good building from the last breath of a working-class housing movement – the garden suburb movement – which does great credit to this country." More importantly, he saw it as "an immediate link with the creation of music which touched millions".

This link is documented by a series of photographs taken in the house by Paul's brother Mike McCartney, showing, for example, Paul and John on the sofa with their guitars with Paul's maths exercise book open, revealing the words "I will hold your hand".

Reaction from the membership has been mixed: broadly those from the North approve, while those from the South indicate some degree of puzzlement. Drury is unrepentant: "Any organisation can so easily get turgid and backward looking. We are preoccupied with the past quite a lot, so it is good to be edging forward."

In fact Drury regrets that the public perception of the National Trust is so closely linked to houses, although he served for 11 years as Historic Buildings Secretary and is an expert on antique furnishings. "Our country houses are very important and I'm very proud of them, but they do fuel the false impression that the Trust is very rich," he says. "In fact most of the big country houses run at a loss and the Trust's financial position is precarious. It needs more members."

There is another reason why the stately home perception displeases Drury: "It devalues the rest of our work, which is just as remarkable. We own 506,000 acres of countryside and through Enterprise Neptune, which is the single most important campaign the Trust has undertaken, we have protected 502 miles of coastline." Once land is acquired, the Trust has a unique power to declare it inalienable,

which means it cannot be sold, mortgaged or compulsorily purchased without recourse to Parliament.

In the light of present conflicts over road proposals, I asked Mr Drury about relations between the Trust and the Department of Transport (DoT). "In most cases the DoT tries to avoid our inalienable land," he said, "but when threatened we are obliged by statute to defend it – and we do. That is the situation at Hindhead. The proposal to take the A3 by-pass on concrete stilts across the Devil's Punchbowl was rejected as unthinkable. The Trust insists that the road is run through a tunnel, an option it also wants to see adopted at the even more sensitive World Heritage site of Stonehenge. At Golden Cap in Dorset, where the plan was to run the A35 through some of the Trust's loveliest coastal land, the DoT listened to the Trust's arguments and reduced its proposal from a double to a single carriageway. This is still considered unacceptable and the Trust opposes it as publicly as possible."

"We are not against the car," Drury added, "but the present rate at which life is dominated by the car cannot be sustained.

At the last AGM it was suggested that the number of visitors arriving by car should be reduced from 90 per cent to 60 per cent. A tall order, but a move in the right direction. When Prior Park near Bath opens this season, all visitors will have to walk or come by public transport – there are no parking facilities. The Trust has initiated other strategies: work on 12 cycle tracks to run from urban centres to Trust properties; cheaper combined public transport and entry tickets for some properties and the continuing policy of listing available public transport in the handbook to enable those who are careless to reach the properties – in theory at least.

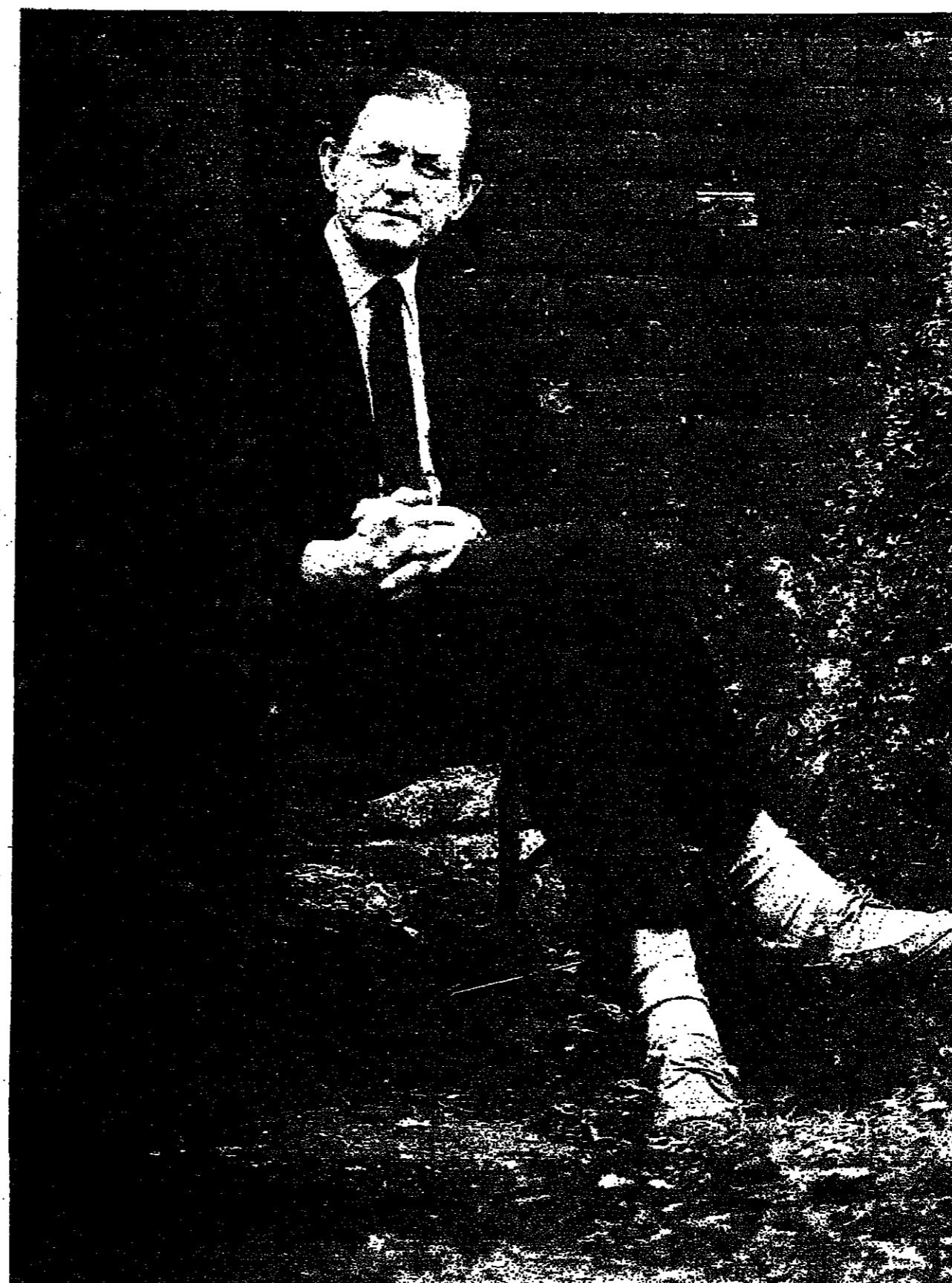
"I want the National Trust to be appreciated by a wider sector of the population" said Drury, who is fully aware of the middle-class, middle-England image of Trust members. He pointed to three schemes – "Linking People with Places" – operating in Plymouth, Birmingham and Newcastle, which reach out to connect people from depressed inner city areas with the amenities that nearby Trust properties can offer them. In Newcastle the project has apparently been so successful that older people and single mothers have formed their own groups to organise walks, field trips and weekends.

This seems very much more in the spirit of Octavia Hill, the Trust founder whose aim was to create "outdoor sitting-rooms for the poor", rather than the stereotypical huntin' shootin' and fishin' stately home incumbent whose image the words "National Trust" conjure up for so many.

Hunting, of course, has caused the Trust some headaches over the years. What are the new director general's views on it?

"Our policy is to allow hunting – which is perfectly legal after all – where it has traditionally taken place and not to allow it where it would damage habitats or if the land has been given to us with a no-hunting condition."

He is aware of the intense pas-



sion the subject provokes: "To some, mostly country people (and it is these we depend on as employees, tenants and benefactors in our work), it is an inalienable right, while to others – many of them very people we are doing the work for – it is something utterly repugnant. It is best for us to keep out of the argument."

Martin Drury is more concerned with finding ways in which Trust properties can be shown more imaginatively. He has just launched the "Thousand Threads" project, so called because it seeks to weave a tapestry of information by means of a series of high technology "Gateways" at 30 properties. If it comes off (support of £11.35 million has been sought from the Millennium Commission), virtual reality, CD-ROMs, fly-by-wire models and interactive hands-on displays will be used. This will help to deepen the appeal of the properties and improve visitor enjoyment, while an even larger audience will be tapped both here and abroad through CD-ROM and the Internet.

Up-to-the-minute stuff intended for the staid old National

Trust, demonstrating Mr Drury's belief that it is essential to move with the times. "I want to spread the social base of the membership and also get over the fact that the Trust is a charity in need, not an opulent great ship sailing confidently towards the future. I want to improve the schools education programme: children of all races are the British people of the future, and it is their National Trust." He is also keenly aware that the Trust has to earn public affection by giving people what they want. Which brings us back to the Beatles House.

COUNTRY PURSUITS



A day in the life of Ray Dobbins, water bailiff on the Wye

"I love my job. I've lived on the Wye all my life – I was born in Monmouth, but moved to Rhayader when I was two. It's not regular work: it all depends on the fish. At spawning – autumn – we're out every night around here. We might start at six and not get back until seven the next morning. Often we stake out a ford, then at least you know you're protecting something, even if no poachers come along. Otherwise, we walk up a brook – that's the only way to find out if there's anything going on. Although I have two reserve bailiffs – part-timers who help out as and when needed – we've got a huge area to cover: about 150 miles of river in all. From February to October we're looking for netters near Monmouth – outside our patch. That can mean a long night (I've done 18 hours on the trot there), especially when we've caught someone and they have to be charged."

"We also do shifts around Llanwrst, usually at weekends. That means starting at 2.30pm to catch night fishers using worms to catch trout. It's illegal and I don't know why they do it – there's no money in it – they're poachers at heart."

"There's been a huge shift in poaching. When I began in 1979 everyone was at it and it got a bit nasty. Once I found a dozen salmon heads on my car bonnet and another time it was sprayed with paint. My two reserves were very badly beaten up and a lookout was shot at till he quit."

"Then the magistrates fined some £946 in Rhayader court and for two years we never saw a light on the river. Today we're left with a handful of middle-aged poachers, but there's none of the young lads coming in. Now we probably only catch a couple of local guys each winter. Last year we surprised two poachers and one decided to hide in the river. Luckily he was in shallow water and we found him before he got too cold. Near Monmouth poachers have been drowned netting. That guy was fined about £250."

"Although the enforcement is the most important part of the job, I prefer monitoring. In early spring we plant boxes in the river with 100 fertile salmon eggs in each. We lift them about March to see what progress they've made and carry on checking through the summer."

"When it gets a bit warmer we go electro-fishing. We stretch two nets across the river about 30 metres apart and walk slowly between them with an electrode. This stuns the fish, which we measure and weigh. If any look out of condition, we take scale samples for analysis."

"At the moment we're three years into a project to put up nest boxes for barn owls and we're helping the fishery owners to remove silt from spawning beds that aren't doing so well. It seems to be working, too – last year was the best spawning on the Wye since 1988, but that might just be the hot weather."

"One of the best things about the scientific work is being out on the river during the day and I've been lucky enough to have seen four or five otters during daytime over the past couple of years. They may take the occasional salmon, but they're beautiful creatures."

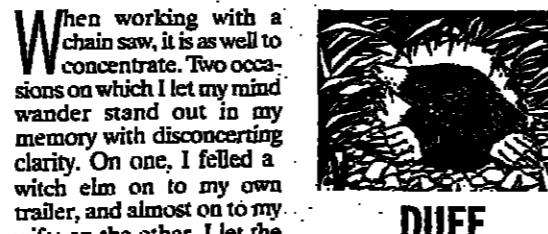
Daniel Butler

A little local trouble

The ParaSearch Investigation Research Unit may be called in to investigate strange goings on in a small Shropshire town. A month ago two workmen claimed they saw an apparition appear from the mist as they made Wem's old town hall safe after it was gutted by fire. One theory is that the ghost is that of teenage maid Jane Churum, who accidentally caused a fire in 1677. Mrs Pauline Dee, a town councillor, said it could be the ghost of a man who helped build the town hall in 1911 and who later killed himself after a row with his father.

Members of the public in North Devon are being asked to help identify tanker drivers who are dumping untreated sewage in country lanes between Bideford and Torrington. The illegal dumping of septic tank waste was first reported towards the end of last year, and although the operators have been spotted, officials at Devon County Council's waste regulation department need registration numbers. Kevan Davies, of the department, said: "The waste contains pathogenic organisms, including those responsible for causing salmonella and hepatitis. It also poses an environmental threat to wildlife."

'When I lobbed logs into my trailer, she went berserk'



DUFF HART-DAVIS

Visitors on foot are no more welcome. Even when I enter into friendly conversation with her owner, she gives off menacing growls. Although wagging her tail, she looks as though she may sink her teeth into me at any moment. When riding in his pick-up truck, she is aggression personified.

What, then, were her motives in making these high-speed passes in the field? Rather than risk having jaws close on my Achilles tendon, I stopped the saw, took off my helmet and made overtures.

Off her own territory, Cindy was a different animal. She wagged her tail, licked my hand, allowed me to chuck her under the chin, she hurries out, barking furiously, and races beside the car, snapping at its wheels.

When I began to lob logs into my trailer, she went berserk, racing in circles, leaping high into the air, and uttering strangled howls as each missile fell out of her reach. Clearly, she wanted action, and in particular sticks thrown for her to chase.

I chose a thin piece of wood and flung it. She went after it like smoke, pounced, gnashed, tossed it into the air and abandoned it – as if it was a rat and she was saying, "There you are, that's how I kill 'em." A couple more sticks received similar treatment. Immediately after she had dealt with each one, she came tearing back for the next.

But then, as a longer branch landed on the grass, she did not shake it or throw it about. Instead, she seized it and bore it off in her mouth, galloping the whole way home. Two, three, four hundred yards up the field, she went, until she squeezed under the gate and disappeared towards the farmyard. Ten minutes later she came back – and this time there was no fooling about. The first stick I threw found favour: she picked it up and sprinted for base. "Good

God!" I thought. "Have they trained her to bring home firewood?"

Inquiries revealed that they had done no such thing: the sticks had not reached the farm. They must have gone into some secret cache. I was left reflecting on how difficult it is to discern animals' motives, and how dangerous it can be to take good temper for granted.

Few creatures can be more deceptive than our champion ram, Agamemnon – that arch destroyer of fence-posts. It is true that his final preparation for a charge – three steps backwards and one to the side, like a rugger player lining up for a place-kick – always gave him sway at the last moment; but even when he was harbouring the most dastardly thoughts, the expression on his face never changed, and only someone who knew him well could divine that if he started to lick his lips or wag his tail, it was time to watch out.

So with Cindy. We may have become buddies in the field, but I still believe that if I took any liberties on her home ground, she would bite me to the bone.

THE INDEPENDENT READERS' OFFER

15 CASCADING BEGONIAS

For £8.95 inc. P&P.

Our mixture of 8 colours of

this marvellous trailing

Begonia will produce an

avalanche of colour cascading

from your hanging baskets

or patio containers.

These Ghent grown Begonias are simple to grow and will make your summer display the envy of your neighbours.

HOW TO ORDER

Ring 0161 431 6431

CREDIT CARD HOTLINE (24 hours service)

IMPORTANT:

Quote 'ING 15' when ordering.

OR Complete the coupon quoting your Access/Visa number or send with crossed cheque/postal orders. NO CASH PLEASE.

To: The Independent Begonia Offer

P.O. Box 64, South West District Office, Manchester M16 5HY.

Send to: The Independent Begonia Offer, P.O. Box 64, South West District Office, Manchester M16 5HY.

We deliver to addresses in the UK only. Please allow 28 days for delivery.

Return within 7 days for refund if not completely satisfied. Offer is subject to availability.



SEND TO: The Independent Begonia Offer

P.O. Box 64, South West District Office, Manchester M16 5HY.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postcode: _____

Please send me _____ packets of 15 Cascading Begonias at £8.95 per pack.

I enclose my cheque/PO No. _____ value £_____

crossed & made payable to Newspaper Publishing TING 15

(name & address on back please).

Or debit my ACCESS/VISA account by the amount of £_____

Signed: _____

Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive offers from Newspaper Publishing PLC

Registered in England No. 190367 TING 15

95.10.15-4

Missing the cars, crime and amusement arcades? That's just Scilly

By Martin Scudamore

Next Stop New York!" would be an appropriate signpost at this far flung corner of Britain. All transatlantic races, whether they involve Blue Riband liners or Branson, begin or end at Bishop's Rock lighthouse at the western extreme of the Isles of Scilly. Looking towards America, you can only try to imagine the vastness of the ocean curving away out of sight. And behind you, the rest of the Scilly archipelago is only marginally more inhabited. The people who do live here recently joined the campaign to introduce double summer time, to allow them to make better use of the lighter evenings. The bid failed, although for a while there was talk (not totally tongue-in-cheek) of declaring a unilateral time shift. In many ways, not just because of daylight hours, Scilly is out of step with the rest of the country.

It's early March here too, but in this blessed corner of the country, it won't seem as if the landscape is only just emerging from winter. Spring comes early to Scilly; indeed for the horticulturalists, who make their living from providing blooms long before growers elsewhere can compete, the winter never really happened. Even during the recent cold snap in the rest of Britain the islands escaped virtually frost free. Now the main growing season is over, but while the tiny sheltered fields are ploughed and left fallow ready for next season's crop, the hedgerows are alive with wild parrotia and

The Atlantic laps the scattering of rocks where the bird and seal populations vastly outnumber the humans. The tranquillity is jealously guarded - there is virtually no new development - and, in contrast to virtually any other seaside resort in Britain, each year pretty well all the accommodation is taken. The lodgings limit means that crowds fail to threaten the peace even at the peak of summer. You can have half a mile or more of clean, white-sandy beach and dunes to yourself in the middle of August. There is not a single amusement arcade, few cars, almost no crime, no litter - nothing tacky at all, yet it's not snobbish, exclusive or unwelcoming.

Chugging open boats, with captains as

cheery as they are knowledgable, comprise the principal mode of transport between the islands. The informality of the system captures the relaxing embrace of a Scilly holiday. You roll up at the jetty at around 10 in the morning and choose your destination for the day. The boatmen will lay on as many craft as necessary to suit the demand. It may seem an uncertain way to travel around an isolated group of islands - but it seems to work: you rarely hear of anyone being stranded. Special trips include bird or seal-watching jaunts to the uninhabited outer islands and rocks, or to Bishop's Rock, and evening rides to follow and cheer on the gig races - a little piece of tradition kept up by the local oarsmen and women.

kept up by the local oarsmen and women. These brightly coloured pilots' boats, some of them over 150 years old, are probably the only gigs you'll see. If you've got gregarious teenagers who want a disco in the evenings, and are not exactly thrilled by the idea of a walk round the headland in the rain, (there are few indoor attractions), Scilly is probably not for you. But we regulars all have our favourite bits of Scilly. For me, St. Mary's 9-hole golf course high on the hills over the harbour, a glorious sea view from every tee; St Martin's beaches; Cromwell's bean-tin of a castle on Tresco; Bryher's hills and coves and awesome Hell Bay; St Agnes (with its siamese twin Gugh; joined at low tide by a narrow sand bar) and its tearooms

and Turk's Head pub. And all the time there is the sea and the sea-birds - you come back knowing your black-backed from your herring gulls, your gannets from your terns and of course your cormorants from your shags. You haven't lived until you've seen puffins clumsy on land but acrobatic in the air, or watched from a little boat late in the evening for the return of the Manx Sheerwater from a day spent in the Bay of Biscay: super fliers, but they daren't land until its dark, for fear of becoming

Holidays in Scilly leave unforgettable memories. The boat setting off from St Mary's in a strange morning mist over an absolutely still sea, with the sun only beginning to break through as we reached Tresco, but promising a scorching day; a morning spent looking at the impressive arrays of

Getting there

By boat: Two and a half hours from Penzance on the *Scillonian III*, run by the Isles of Scilly Steamship Company (01736 62009). There are two return sailings a day in the season, one at other times. The adult return fare is £67, children half price. **By air:** Isles of Scilly Skybus Ltd (0345 105 555) has flights direct to St Mary's from Bristol, Exeter, Newquay or Plymouth as well as Land's End (15 minute flight). Inclusive train-and-plane prices from anywhere in the country are available. The adult return fare from Land's End is £85, children at half price. **By helicopter:** from Penzance to St Mary's or Tresco with British International (01736 63871). The journey time is 20 minutes, the standard adult return is £95, children under 12 fly for half price.

Accommodation
It's all set out in a guide produced by the Isles of Scilly Tourist Office, which also updates the accommodation leaflet every month, showing what's still available. Self-catering accommodation fills up first, and is already largely full for school holiday times in 1996. For a brochure, telephone 01720 422536, fax 01720 422049 or write to The Isles of Scilly Tourist Information Centre, Porthcressa Bank, St Mary's, Isles of Scilly TR21 0JL.

otic and tropical plants and trees in the Abbey Gardens, followed by a visit to Val- lilla, the resting place for dozens of wooden masts, masts and stern plates from wrecked ships; a fish-and-chip supper in Hugh Town, before embarking in the little boats again to follow the gigs. This evening was a "swappee" where each crew had to exchange their familiar gig with the crew from one of the other islands. After a rousing finish, in which the Men-a-Vaur crew won by a length, Golden Eagle, we strolled up to Buzzza Hill to watch the sun dipping down into the Atlantic over the twin hills of Samson. Maybe the mystery is not why people return year after year, but why they ever go back home at all.

A high-contrast, black and white photograph of a coastal scene. The upper half shows dark, silhouetted foliage and rocks against a bright sky. The lower half shows a rocky shore in the foreground, a body of water with a distant shoreline and hills, and a small boat with figures on the water. A vertical line of text is visible on the left side of the image.

Spring arrives first in Scilly, and the locals are asking for double summer time

Tel: 0171 293 2222

travel • uk, overseas

Fax: 0171 293 2505

Self Catering UK

UK Travel

Ireland

London

City Breaks

France

COTTAGE HOLIDAYS
FROM ONLY £25*

BIG NEW 1996 BROCHURE

1000's of quality cottages throughout the country. choose a short break from £61 or a week's holiday from £87 per cottage.

1995 BROCHURE PRICES HELD - CALL TODAY FOR DETAILS
Quoting code DIA115
PPR.W based on 4 sharing an 4 bed property.

Country Holidays
Britain's favourite cottage holidays
01282 445721

The Lake District

HILLTHWAITE HOUSE Windermere Threlkeld Road, overlooking lake. All rooms ensuite (some with Jacuzzi baths) Satellite TV, tea-making, Sauna, Tyrolean Room and heated indoor pool ideally for our guests use. 2 nights, 5 course dinner, B&B incl. VAT only £36, 3 nights only £130. Brochure: (015394) 43636.

LAKE DISTRICT Welcome Cottages. Pets, linen, fuel inc. Many less than £150 p/w Oct-April. Brochure Tel. 01756 702228.

HILLTHWAITE HOUSE Windermere Threlkeld Road, overlooking lake. All rooms ensuite (some with Jacuzzi baths) Satellite TV, tea-making, Sauna, Tyrolean Room and heated indoor pool ideally for our guests use. 2 nights, 5 course dinner, B&B incl. VAT only £36, 3 nights only £130. Brochure: (015394) 43636.

COTSWOLDS
Enjoy a break in the beautiful surroundings of the Cotswolds. We have over 190 quality cottages to choose from. **CALL US FOR YOUR FREE 1996 BROCHURE** Quoting DIA124
Country Holidays
01282 445721

Jersey

THE ISLAND OF JERSEY

Hotels direct at bargain prices. Package holidays by air & sea to 22 of Jersey's finest properties. Deals for children, senior citizens, & singles. Guaranteed you won't find it cheaper. *Out now: our Fabulous new 52 page brochure*

Island Hotels Direct
01202 434310
ATAV 8331 ATOL 078

Northumbria

NORTHUMBRIA HOLIDAY COTTAGES

Discover the best kept secrets of the North East and enjoy a week or more, or take a short break, amongst idyllic scenery and beautiful beaches.

New for 1996
RELAXING SHORT BREAKS
FREE 1996 BROCHURE
CALL NOW OR
01200 444070
QUOTING REF NO DIA604

Northumbria's Welcome Cottages. Pets, linen, fuel inc. Many less than £150 p/w Oct-April. Tel. 01756 702217

PROMISE OF PRIMROSE, wide spring skies, birds on marshes, white-capped waves - this is Norfolk. 40 holiday homes from Norfolk Country. Cousins to splendidly chosen spots? Wren, Redwing, Cuckoo, 2-12. Bike hire too. For brochure FREE D500-400407 Tel. 01692 50256.

Hants/L.W.

NEAR YARMOUTH, quiet comfortable areas. Sleeps 2, fully equipped, no stairs. Close harbour, walks. Details 01863 760 851

IRELAND

EMERALD COTTAGE HOLIDAYS
BRILLIANT VALUE - MARCH/APRIL/MAY - "One-way Price" CORN, KERRY, TIPPERARY, CLARE, LIMERICK, GALWAY See Ireland at its best in Spring/early Summer - Brochure: **01756 702214**
Shamrock Cottages, 50 High St, Wellington, Somerset. 01823 681060. Cof Bro of 280 select houses. Disc Fares, AT&T. ENJOY IRELAND Holidays. Cottages/Castles/Cruising. 1000's of properties in 100's of locations from £35 ppow Inc car on ferry (5 share) 01254 822699.

AN IRISH COUNTRY HOLIDAY from the widest choice. Individual Cottages, Castles, Hotels and Farmhouses. Fishing, Golf and River Shannon cruising. Telephone 01502 560688 (24 hrs)

SHAMROCK COTTAGES, 50 High St, Wellington, Somerset. 01823 681060. Cof Bro of 280 select houses. Disc Fares, AT&T. ENJOY IRELAND Holidays. Cottages/Castles/Cruising. 1000's of properties in 100's of locations from £35 ppow Inc car on ferry (5 share) 01254 822699.

KERRY COTTAGE, T.B Appr. Sips 5/6. Scenic, coastal areas nr Kenmare, Beara Peninsula. £135-£175pw. Tel 01353 64 63150.

IRELAND Specialists Choose from over 100 cottages. 01282 445726 (IA111)

S W CORK, Free now to June 13. Trad 19C cottage. 2 dbl 2 sgl, sea view, large garden, wood fire, hrg, washer/drier. 100 miles Swinsea/Cork ferry. £125 pw. Tel. 01502 560688 (24 hrs)

Country Holidays
01282 445721

The Peak District

EDEN An oasis of peace in the heart of 2 national parks (Lake District). Free 88 page accommodation guide. Eden Keaton 01783 652428 (24hrs)

RATHER SPECIAL COTTAGES in a secret corner of Southern Lakeland. Tel: 015395 38475

PRIVATLY OWNED bungalow at Hawkshead village, or Ambleside. For photos & details Tel. (0161) 7485140

SOUTH LAKES Architects luxury cottage. Sips 4. (01763) 740873.

LAKE DISTRICT Specialists Choose from 375 cottages. 01282 445728 (LIA105)

PEAK DISTRICT Choose from over 230 cottages set in the beautiful surroundings of the Peak District.

CALL US FOR YOUR FREE 1996 BROCHURE Quoting DIA124
Country Holidays
01282 445721

Scotland

Welcome COTTAGE HOLIDAYS IN SCOTLAND

LITTLE HAVEN. Well equipped village house, sleeps 6. 100 yds beach. Tel. Shore (01432) 332121 (day) or (01487) 821738 (eve)

SCOTLAND

SELF CATERING SCOTLAND CONSULT THE EXPERTS. Over 3,000 self-catering properties in all areas from luxury houses to croft cottages. Write or phone for brochure.

WELLS-NEXT-THE-SEA self cottage sleeps 4-11+ cot. Dogs welcome. Weekly (midweek) breaks. Tel. (01485) 518056.

SCOTLAND

Discover the highlands and lowlands of Scotland and choose from over 440 quality cottages the length and breadth of this glorious country.

CALL US FOR YOUR FREE 1996 BROCHURE Quoting DIA127
Country Holidays
01282 445721

Northumbria

Mackays Agency
30 Frederick St, Edinburgh EH2 2JR

Cottage Cottages in Scotland

EXCEPTIONAL holiday properties in the most beautiful areas of Scotland. FREE 72 PAGE BROCHURE. QUOTING (01328) 364011 QUOTE S272 (24 hrs)

SUFFOLK HERITAGE COAST Dunwich. Charming period farmhouse. Beautiful seaside village. Sips 6. Garden. Car parking. Mrs Matthew's Manor House. Charming. Rickmanworth. WD3 6ER Tel (01494) 762688 (also cottage for 2)

COTTAGES-HOUSES, over 180 in South Scotland. Full colour brochure. G M Thompson & Co 01556504600

NW SUTHERLAND Craft cottages by the sea from £110 pw. 01507 466003

ISLE OF JURA Cottage by sea, sleeps 5. Hill walking, fishing. Telephone (01786) 850274

SCOTLAND Specialists Choose from over 520 cottages. 01282 445726 (LIA 107)

Suffolk

YORK UP TO 50% OFF ALL facilities Brochure Worthow Court Hotel 01904 425156

N. YORK MOORS, Gilmerton. Unusual old cottage. Rustic charm. Antique furnishings, mod cons. open stove, radiators. Sleeps 2-4. Tranquility. From £110pw. Tel. (01751) 432588.

YORKSHIRE Specialists Choose from over 500 cottages. 01282 445726 (LIA 109)

EASTER VACANCIES North Yorks Moors overlooking Robin Hood's Bay. Scattering newly renovated luxury stone barns, sleeps 2/6. Moors, coast, Dales, York. Heartbeat country. Tel. (01947) 880330

GRAN'S END, WILBY, Combe. Family holiday home in unspoilt coastal village. Garden, open fire, C/H. Sleeps 5. Tel. (01943) 830438.

Hawes, Wensleydale, 40 Country Cottages. Pubs welcome. Broch. 01969 667 654

YORKSHIRE DALES Welcome Cottages. Pets, linen, fuel inc. Many less than £150 p/w Oct-April. Tel. 01756 702209

SPACIOUS, COMFORTABLE fully equipped country house, sleeps 8. 3 Days £160. 7 Days from £220. For details phone (01379) 384432

INDEPENDENT

VISITOR CALL-12

0891-87-10-PLUS

What's on this Week 10 Getting to the Airports 15

What's on for Children 11 Accommodation Advice 16

Places to Visit for Children 12 Sundays in London 30

Popular Attractions 13 River Trips 31

Carous (per person) cheap rate and (per person) at other times. Information supplied and updated daily by The London Tourist Board

Amsterdam
£115*

To make a booking or to request a brochure for this and more offers to 11 other exciting cities, see your travel agent, or phone:

0121 252 3665

Thomson
CITY BREAKS

1 night in 17 hotel. 1st-22nd March by air departing from Manchester

0990 133537
0990 133537
0990 133537
0990 133537

We Work. You Save.

UP TO £99*
ON A 14 NIGHT SELF-DRIVE CAMPING HOLIDAY IN EUROPE.

See how much you can now save in our latest summer '96 brochure.

EuroSites

Special Interest Holidays

NEW for 1996...

COSTA RICA
TIEN SHAN & YEMEN
plus...

HIMALAYA KERALA
AFRICA LATIN AMERICA
ICELAND E. EUROPE
EDEN & NEW ZEALAND

YORKSHIRE

Discover the beauty and splendour of Yorkshire. We have over 500 quality cottages to choose from.

CALL US FOR YOUR FREE 1996 BROCHURE Quoting DIA129

Country Holidays
01282 445721

Holiday Cottages

is the Yorkshire Dales, York, Coast, Moors, Peak & Lake District Over 200 superb self-catering cottages. Write or phone for our fully illustrated brochure.

01756 700872
Holiday Cottages York/Leeds/Wakefield/Sheffield (4) North Yorkshire. BD23 1FB

HAWES, WENSLEYDALE, 40 Country Cottages. Pubs welcome. Broch. 01969 667 654

YORKSHIRE DALES Welcome Cottages. Pets, linen, fuel inc. Many less than £150 p/w Oct-April. Tel. 01756 702209

SPACIOUS, COMFORTABLE fully equipped country house, sleeps 8. 3 Days £160. 7 Days from £220. For details phone (01379) 384432

THE INDEPENDENT

Newspaper Publishing plc regrets that although every reasonable precaution is taken, no responsibility can be accepted for flights and/or accommodation offered through these columns, or any loss arising therefrom. Readers are advised to take all necessary precautions before entering into any travel arrangements.

For further French Holidays please see page 18.

FERRY GUIDE

EuroSites

01235 824364
QUOTING REFERENCE 96877

*99p saving on 2 week holiday for up to 8 people in double or triple room June 8th - Sept 1st. EuroSites is a trading name of Eurosites Holidays Ltd, who are an Agent for Eurosites UK Ltd. ATOL 43826

Tel: 0171 293 2222

travel • overseas

Fax: 0171 293 2505

Take Off

Take Off

Take Off

Take Off

Because we think the world of you ...

current best buys on the world's finest airlines

(excl. taxes)	one way	return	one way	return	one way	return		
SYDNEY	£329	£499	NEW YORK	£95	£169	JOHANNESBURG	£249	£315
PERTH	£325	£575	BOSTON	£129	£170	HARARE	£207	£245
AUCKLAND	£332	£615	FLORIDA	£159	£215	HARAGI	£204	£299
HONG KONG	£209	£407	LOS ANGELES	£195	£239	CARO	£142	£237
SINGAPORE	£279	£449	SAN FRANCISCO	£195	£271	DUBAI	£194	£275
BALI	£226	£429	TORONTO	£125	£199	RO	£294	£489
SAIGON	£297	£495	VANCOUVER	£255	£279	PARIS	£69	£69
TOKYO	£297	£495	CARIBBEAN	£194	£285	AMSTERDAM	£69	£69
MEXICO CITY	£215	£572	MEXICO CITY	£263	£352	GENEVA	£28	£89
DELHI	£226	£347	KATHMANDU	£265	£473	AROUND THE WORLD	£877	£877

plus discounted quality accommodation per room per night from

AUSTRALIA £33 • USA £31 • AFRICA £37 • PACIFIC £39 • ASIA £30

USA CAR HIRE FROM £13 PER DAY • CALL NOW FOR OUR NEW NORTH AMERICA DIRECTORY

Mon - Sat 9-6pm • Thurs 9-7pm • Sun 10-6pm (All shops)

FLIGHTBOOKERS travelling freestyle

Your one stop Travel Shop

BRITISH AIRWAYS TRAVEL CLINIC **AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND** **0171 757 2468**
at our London address
128 & 177 1/2 Fleet Street, London EC4A 2LA

OPEN 7 DAYS
Internet address: <http://www.flightbookers.co.uk>
E-Mail: flights@flights.atspace.com
ATOL 2562 • IATA • ABTA 0086

WINTER OFFERS WITH Canadian AIRLINES **0171 757 2444**
FIRST & BUSINESS CLASS **0171 757 2500**
ALSO AT GATWICK AIRPORT **01293 568 300**
Open 7am - 10pm DAILY

AUSTRALIA

GUARANTEED LOWEST AIRFARES ON SCHEDULED AIRLINES officially appointed **QANTAS** agent
Accommodation • Car Hire • Campervans • Extended Touring • City Stopovers • Cruises
Passport & Visa Service • BA Travel Clinic • Foreign Exchange • Dedicated Australia Dept
For all this at the most competitive prices & much more contact FLIGHTBOOKERS

CALL FLIGHTBOOKERS FOR YOUR COMPLETE GUIDE ON DISCOUNT FLIGHTS & HOLIDAYS DOWN UNDER
BROCHURE LINE: 0171 757 2208 (24hrs) RESERVATIONS: 0171 757 2468

TRAILFINDERS

THE TRAVEL EXPERTS

Australia plus 3 FREE domestic flights
Departures from many UK airports including Heathrow, Birmingham, Bristol, Glasgow & Manchester.
£726 return.

Los Angeles non-stop special £239 return.

FLIGHTS • HOTELS • CAR HIRE • TRAVEL INSURANCE • TOURS • CRUISES • BUDGETS • ITINERARIES

worldwide attention to detail

42-50 Earls Court Road • LONDON W8 6PT

Long Haul Flights 0171-938 3265

Transatlantic & European 0171-937 5409

194 Kensington High Street • LONDON W8 7RG

Long Haul Flights 0171-938 3839

Transatlantic & European 0171-938 3232

First & Business Class 0171-938 3444

22-24 The Priory Queensway • BIRMINGHAM B4 6BS

Worldwide Flights 0121-236 1224

48 Corn Street • BRISTOL BS1 1HQ

Worldwide Flights 0117-929 9008

254-284 Sauchiehall Street • GLASGOW G2 5EH

Worldwide Flights 0141-353 2224

58 Deansgate • MANCHESTER M3 2FF

Worldwide Flights 0161-850 6968

First & Business Class 0161-859 3434

FOR YOUR FREE COPY OF THE
TRAILFINDER MAGAZINE
CALL 0171-938 3366 ANYTIME

ATOL 1458 IATA ABTA 09701

... people think the world of us!

Special Interest Holidays

EXPLORE

small group exploratory holidays

- Adventure tours
- Walks & Treks
- Wildlife Safaris
- Sailtreks & Seatreks
- Raft & River Journeys
- Wilderness Experience

Europe Turkey Greece Egypt
Middle East Africa China Thailand
Indonesia Americas Aus/NZ...

180 unique adventures from 8 days to 5 weeks. Small groups, expert leaders.

01252 344161 (24hrs)

Explore Worldwide (IT)

Aldershot

GU11 1LQ

Original Adventures

Fully bonded ATOL/ATOL No. 2656

Special Interest Holidays

ATOL

ASA

INDIA

AFRICA OVERLAND

G ALL THE AMERICAS

1 Camp Green, Dunsden

Steenvale, IP14 0LA

Tel: 01274 378100

Dragoman

AFRICA

Adventure Safaris and Expeditions.

Full details in 96/97 Brochure. Call

TRACKS

0171 937 3028

12 Abingdon Road, London W1 GAF

ABTA 0971 - ATOL 2222 - World Travel

ICELAND

Designed for All Seasons

City Breaks

Escorted Tours

Golfing, Scuba & Walking

Fishing

For a Colour Brochure call

01443 821 877

0171 930 8189

SCANDINAVIAN TRAVEL SERVICE LTD

Quebec, SITI

ATOL 0745 - ATOL 3064

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

EXODUS
The Different Holiday

UK leaders in small group adventure holidays with over 20 years experience and the widest choice of trips: choose from 4 different brochures.

Discovery
Overland
Walking
Biking

Full details in brochures

Look, no sticks

If, as they say, traditional skiing is a dying industry, snowboarding is a booming one. After a trip to Zell am See, Charlie English could see why

If you took the recent spate of snowboarding-related advertising to heart, you might think the boarder's world was inhabited solely by danger-loving types. People who jump out of aeroplanes in armchairs, or who like to throw themselves from tall buildings with only a swatch of state-of-the-art fabric to stop them hitting the ground. The sort who, according to the ads, like to drink Pepsi Max or fly through Gatwick Airport. There are a number of snowboarders who are like that. The self-styled hard core who do it, as an editorial in the snowboarding magazine *On Board* says, because "the days of the Wild West are long gone". This is why, it says with some justification, "sports like surfing, snowboarding and skateboarding graduate from activities to lifestyles".

But there is another, probably much larger, group of snowboarders who are riding on the coat-tails of extreme-sport chic without suffering the potential pratfalls (serious injury, repeated use of the word "man"). This is the soft periphery, where I like to think I belong. We can talk about it a lot, but are only infrequently called to leave the sofa.

The six of us, most of whom had skied before but only one of whom — me — had snowboarded, booked up at the Austrian resort of Zell am See; we'd bought our time-slot in the glamour of the winter sports scene. This is where it's done! I thought, stepping from the bus. There are people here who do it for six months a year! And, after hiring a battered old board that had cost more per day than I'd pay to buy it in a second-hand shop back home, and after getting into the gondola for the first journey to the top of the mountain, the cold excitement set in.

On the first morning, thinks I, I would explain to my skiing compadres how the thing is done. We would take gondolas and chairlifts to the flat top of a 2,000m peak; the beginners would be ushered into a state of snowboarding toddlerhood



Advanced skiers may look good, but snowboarders look better Photos: Skishoot

and it would be downhill from there. Except that Zell am See's chairlifts are exclusively ski-on/ski-off affairs that assume a degree of snowboarding competence. So we started at the top of the first gondola, and the top of the black ("difficult") run. There, only Phil was committed to a snowboard. "The plan is," said Phil, "that you lock your boots to the board here [tightens up bindings] and then you stand up." He wobbled upright. "Then you set off down there [falls, gets up], turning," I shouted after him, and it would be downhill from there. Except that Zell am See's chairlifts are exclusively ski-on/ski-off affairs that assume a degree of snowboarding competence. So we started at the top of the first gondola, and the top of the black ("difficult") run. There, only Phil was committed to a snowboard. "The plan is," said Phil, "that you lock your boots to the board here [tightens up bindings] and then you stand up." He wobbled upright. "Then you set off down there [falls, gets up], turning," I shouted after him,

"is just a question of pushing the back round!" A couple of painful hours later Phil had determined that he needed professional help, and bought two hours with Marco, a pony-tailed Austrian instructor. "He told me, 'Your shoulders are your steering wheel,'" said Phil, "and he stands there with his arms spread out, twisting from the waist." It was good advice: Phil could almost immediately turn in both directions — the hardest part. It gets a lot easier when you don't have to go down

a run on your hands and knees.

They say skiing is a dying industry: snowboarding, on the other hand, is booming. It isn't difficult to see why. Advanced skiers, weaving down a piste with skis and knees in perfect sympathy, look great, but an advanced snowboarder, swaying one way then the other, hands inches above the snow, looks much better. When last I went snowboarding, in Tignes a few years ago, there were only five or six snowboards out each day. This time, every fourth person on the slopes was on a snowboard, and 75 per cent of those were teenage Europeans in the most stylish snowboard wear.

The gear (called Bastard, Pervert, Nuts) draws styles from pop music: it can be as baggy as a New York rapper's, or tight-fitting and collarless like a Manchester spiv's. Ski-wear looks old by comparison. It's unsurprising that boarders get up a lot of people's noses, and skiers' noses in particular. Snowboarders don't go out of their way to make skiing friends. Nick, skiing down a steep-walled gunbarrel of a run, had the stuffing knocked out of him by a teen on a board called Bitch. "Bitch" was sitting up on the sidewall, then without looking pushed himself upright, flipped the board round and shot across the front of Nick's skis, knocking him over, boots snapping out of his bindings, hat flying, sunglasses smashing on his face. The boarder, further down, looked back, then pushed on. "What happened?" asked a skier who stopped to help. But Nick later became a convert. "They're certainly the coolest people on the mountain," he said. "And the packs of kids — they're like packs of wolves. They sit there on the side of the slopes watching, then suddenly all get up and set off together. I loved it." Phil said: "I'd definitely do it again." John said: "I wish I'd learnt when I was younger, when falling down wasn't so hard." Richard, sadly, wasn't there. He was in hospital because he'd broken his wrist on the last day.

All you need to know about snowboarding

Equipment

The chief innovation for winter '96/97 is the "step-in binding". With this system, the rider clips into his/her bindings by simply stepping on them in the same manner as with ski bindings. The difference is that the binding is hidden under the boots and the tools are the usual soft snowboard boots modified and stiffened. You therefore have the freedom of a normal snowboard boot and binding set up with the convenience of a ski binding. Many manufacturers have developed their own versions of the system and prices will probably drop, so 1997 looks set to be the year of the step-in. The "360-degree cap" is the name of a new board-manufacturing technique.

Tr�ditional construction relies on the sides of the board being formed by a strip of plastic. Cap construction dispenses with this strip and allows the sides to be formed from the fibreglass layers, resulting in a lighter, stronger board. It also looks super. The major manufacturers all have boards that use this technology in next winter's ranges.

Resorts

Places with a variety of terrain will score highly with snowboarders, as will resorts that get more than their fair share of powder snow or have vast expanses of off-piste. The more advanced boarder will be impressed by purpose-built obstacles and jumps. Bulgaria is a recommended choice for snowboarders. It's cheap and the terrain is awesome. Avoriaz and Les Arcs in France have always been popular with snowboarders. In Austria, try Axamer Lizum just outside Innsbruck and in Italy, Madonna di Campiglio. Andorra has Pas de la Casa which is blessed with very reliable snow. In the US, try Whistler, Lake Louise or the Arapahoe Basin.

Al Flemin is a freelance writer and runs the Snowboard Klinik.

Snow's up by Chris Gill

Duty free in Italy

Italian ski resorts are currently good value, thanks to the weak lira. But one stands out — in principle, at least — as being better value than the rest: Livigno, a large village isolated in a high, remote valley close to the Swiss border.

Livigno is a duty-free enclave. What you might expect the resort's status to mean is that prices would generally be lower than in other Italian resorts. In practice, the difference in the everyday cost of living is slight: when I travelled from Livigno to the nearby resort of Bormio last winter, lunch on the mountain and an après-ski beer seemed to cost much the same in both.

Perhaps a serious spirits drinker would reach a different conclusion. But the real difference between Livigno and neighbours like Bormio is the duty-free resort's heavyweight shopping opportunities. The long main street and its side-shoots are flanked by smart clothes shops, camera and video shops, perfume shops and, of course, ski shops. And, yes, the prices are temptingly low.

When I was there, one of my fashion-conscious companions filled a small suitcase with new shirts, trousers and sweaters. Whether they actually represented quite the savings he perceived, we'll never know. (Stroll down the main street of any Italian resort these days and you're likely to be impressed by at least some of the prices.)

But the same companion also studied ski equipment, and calculated handsome savings on a set of Salomon skis and bindings; sadly, the skis he wanted were sold out (this was March, after all). I was sorely tempted by a Nikon compact camera on sale for perhaps £50 less than in Britain. But in the end I, too, kept my plastic dry.

Snow report

It has been a great week in the Alps, at least for people skiing at high altitude. In the wake of the worthwhile snowfalls of the previous week, many resorts have seen some sunny days and clear, crisp nights. Not surprisingly, resort-level runs have suffered, especially in low or south-facing resorts — but at least those runs have remained skiable, even where they have become heavy, icy or patchy. And the skiing on higher slopes, where temperatures have remained lower, has been excellent. The snowfalls of ten days ago favoured the western Alps (France and western Italy) rather



than the east (Austria and the Dolomites), but right now, wherever in the Alps you look, altitude is the key to the best conditions. Here in Verbier, the streets are clear of snow but there's a foot of snow on the

THE INDEPENDENT TRAVEL OFFER

AMSTERDAM

travelling by ORIENT-EXPRESS

The first ever journey to Amsterdam by the world famous Venice Simplon Orient-Express will take place in early May and we have managed to obtain places on this historic journey of a lifetime especially for Independent readers.

DEPART MAY 9th late morning from London Victoria aboard this magnificent train in beautifully restored Pullman carriages. A memorable lunch with wine will be served as well as champagne aperitifs.

After crossing the channel by SeaCat check into your elegant cabin and lose yourself in the luxury of the train enroute to Amsterdam.

In the evening maybe enjoy a cocktail in the Bar followed by a superb dinner in the Restaurant Car (Drinks not included) before retiring to your cabin.

Early morning arrival in Amsterdam on the 10th of May when you will be transferred to your selected hotel in the heart of the city.

Return to London Heathrow by scheduled flight or by Eurostar train to London Waterloo on the day of your choice.

A holiday perfect for that special occasion!

PRICES:

2 nights - 1 night Orient Express plus 1 night hotel in Amsterdam - 3 Star £449, 4 Star £470, 5 Star £490. 3 nights - 1 night Orient Express plus 2 nights hotel in Amsterdam - 3 Star £495, 4 Star £525, 5 Star £570. (Other durations available. Prices based on two people sharing)

Reg. in England 1903987 Newspaper Publishing PLC



For full details or to book, please call

0990 737373

or send completed coupon to:

INDEPENDENT TRAVEL OFFER

Highlight Travel Ltd, PO Box 39,

Hoddessdon, Herts EN10 7RJ

Name: (Mr/Ms/Miss/Ms)

Address:

Postcode:

Please tick this box if you do not wish to receive future mailing from NEWSPAPER PUBLISHING PLC or from companies approved by NEWSPAPER PUBLISHING PLC

INT 157

All holidays are ABTA bonded (E7775)

The land that inspires poets, artists, musicians and bank managers.

(Irish short breaks from £79.)

£110
per person
From DUBLIN CITY BREAK VALUE WEEKEND

Aer Lingus

0181-569 4001

Return flights, with two nights 5* B&B accommodation, including taxes and service charges

Based on 2 people travelling together, sharing twin room and spending one Saturday night in Ireland. Valid until March 31st 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Excluding April 2nd-7th 1996

Flight and car for up to 5 adults. Available up to May 22nd

Tel: 0171 293 2222

travel • overseas

Fax: 0171 293 2505

Sometime

Take Off

Australia
New Zealand

• The Best Value • The Widest Choice of Holidays & Flights •

AIR NEW ZEALAND **QANTAS**

AUSTRALIA FROM £499 AUCKLAND FROM £614

HOTEL ROOMS FROM £18 CAR RENTAL FROM £18

CAMPERS FROM £26 AMERICA FROM £199

CANADA FROM £195

94 Fulham Palace Road, London W6 9PL ASTA V433 D2446 IATA

Tel: 0181 748 4455 Fax: 0181 748 2274

NZTIS

Take Off

Canada & Worldwide

WORLDWIDE Return flights from

JO'BURG £499 SINGAPORE £499

TOKYO £565

LOS ANGELES £295

ORLANDO £275

ST. JOHN'S £299

CANADA Return flights from

TORONTO £195

VANCOUVER £269

MONTRÉAL £269

CALGARY £269

ST. JOHN'S £299

Canada & Worldwide

0181 741 0777

Overseas Travel Overseas Travel Overseas Travel Overseas Travel

GRAND CANADIAN Coast to Coast

Montreal • Québec • Toronto • Niagara Falls • Lake Louise • Banff • Jasper • Vancouver

17 days from £1425*

Starting in the delightful Alpine towns of Banff and Jasper with its fashionable marinas and dominating CN Tower, plus city tour. Visit old fashioned Quebec City, now declared a World Heritage Site. Enjoy the town of Niagara and the wonder of the Falls.

Titan **HiTours**
Our Service Makes a World of Difference!

CANADIAN ROCKIES and Vancouver

Vancouver • Gastown • Victoria • Butchart Gardens • Kelowna • Jasper • Lake Louise • Banff

14 days from £1065*

• Spectacular journeys between Vancouver and Calgary, including Mt Robson, Lake Louise, Victoria Glacier and Columbia Icefield.

• Leisure stay in beautiful Banff, North America's liveliest small town with visit to Lake Louise and Victoria Glacier.

• Explore the Okanagan Valley with winery visit.

• Two nights in Jasper with visit to the idyllic Maligne Lake.

24 HR BROCHURE HOTLINE - 01737 760033

Please send information on the following tours: (please tick)

Grand Canadian Canadian Rockies Canada USA/Canada East Coast

U.S.A. Australia South Africa Europe Escorted Cruise & Tour

Name _____
Address _____
Postcode _____

Titan Travel Ltd., HiTours House, 26-30 Holmthorpe Avenue, Redhill, Surrey RH1 2NL

MADEIRA
FROM ONLY £219

EXCEPTIONAL VALUE FOR A WEEK'S HOLIDAY ON THE FLOATING GARDEN OR THE ATLANTIC

THE HOTELS

We have chosen some of the best 3-5 star hotels on the island for their location, facilities and friendly atmosphere. INCLUDED IN THE HIGH PRICE

Return flights from Gatwick and Birmingham to Funchal. This does not include return flights at the hotel of your choice. Bullet breakfast each day in the hotel. Transfers on the island. The service of our representatives on the island.

EXTRA WEEKS Also available at a small supplement.

DEPARTURES THROUGHOUT MARCH & APRIL

For a Full Colour Brochure and Further Details Please Call

Telephone (01452) 381888
ATLANTIC HOLIDAYS LTD
25 Brunswick Road, Gloucester GL1 1JE

AUSTRALIA + NZ
+ FAR EAST & PACIFIC STOPOVERS
TAILORMADE

Endless accommodation & travel options - Let us design your perfect Oz & NZ holiday.

• Expert itinerary planning
• Hotels • Cars & Campers
• Rail & River Cruises
• Mini Stays & Tours
• Best Buy Flights & Round the World

CALL NOW for your 40 page brochure
01202 434320
AUSTRALIA & NEW ZEALAND TRAVEL CENTRE

Bermuda
The Seventh Heaven

OUR NEW FABULOUS 24 PAGE BROCHURE INCLUDES:

- FINEST selection of luxury hotels, cottage colonies and apartments
- SCHEDULED flights from Gatwick and connection flights from regional airports.
- FREE child places.
- SUPERB discounts for OAP's & singles plus FREE extra nights.

PRICE PLEDGE Find any identical holiday cheaper and we will beat it!

FREEPHONE: 0800 591281

ASTA V1656 Cadogan Holidays ATOL 676

France

£39 FRENCH MINIBREAK ESCORTO FOR IT. Treat yourself to a minibreak in Normandy. For £39 per person for two people and a car, you can take a daytime crossing from Portsmouth to Le Havre or Cherbourg and back and have a night in a French hotel. We'll even throw in a continental breakfast. Cabins are available from £10 per person on selected night settings. To book, telephone Bridge Travel on 019927 456045 quoting N.O.3, or just pop into your local travel agent.

Allez France
Hand Picked Villas & Cottages Coast or Country Many with pools

(01903) 745319 ASTA ATOL 1242

800 new ways to discover Europe

Seek out the interesting, the unusual, and the stimulating with new walking and cycling holidays in Europe. Dozens of options from Norway to Morocco, from Ireland to Turkey, from Spain to Italy. Ring now for your brochure.

HEADWATER ATOL 2412

01606 42220

TUSCANY UMBRIA
& Coastal Regions in Italy The best Private Villas Farmhouses and Apartments. S.Pools with T.A. Apts. in Venice, Florence and Rome. Excellent prices, knowledge & service as we deal directly with the owners. Please for free brochure.

0171 272 5469 TUSCANY NOW

ITALIAN COLLECTION
Tuscany, Umbria, Marche, Sicily, Sardinia. Beautiful farmhouses & cottages with private pools in unspoilt rural locations. 01403 259788 (01793) 501 110 VENICE

ITALY
Traditional country villas with swimming pool. Discover the 'green heart' of Italy with our flexible, fly-drive holidays, staying in a choice of charming intimate hotels. Painting, art & architecture and cosy holidays plus short breaks to Florence. For info on breaks, please call us on 0181 0181 995 9323 ASTA V1656 ATOL 1922 ATTO

France

france '96
A superb selection of over 1000 self-catering cottages, villas and chalets.

01752 670067 **France** **holidays**

ALL DATES. S.W. France. Super house, private pool & lake. Sips 10, 3 bathrooms. Tel. 01242 123666.

LOT DORDOGNE Charmingly restored farmhouse. Very well equipped. Sips 10. Lge pool. Tel. 01539 431860. Yarrow 0181 874 9513.

MED/LANGUEDOC Large pool. Fully equipped farmhouses. Large pool. Tel. 01539 431864.

DORDOGNE Converted Barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 431864. Tel. 01252 994460.

CHARENTE MARITIME Maritime & Royal 6 beds & 2 bath. Close to beach. Garden. 01947 605723 ASTA ATOL 2005.

FRENCH ALPS Converted barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 710585.

ITALY
The complete selection caters to coast, Villas, Farmhouses, Castles, Charming Apartments, Apartments, S.Pools with T.A. Apts. in Venice, Florence and Rome. Excellent prices, knowledge & service as we deal directly with the owners. Please for free brochure.

0161 707 8795

ITALIAN
Traditional country villas with swimming pool. Discover the 'green heart' of Italy with our flexible, fly-drive holidays, staying in a choice of charming intimate hotels. Painting, art & architecture and cosy holidays plus short breaks to Florence. For info on breaks, please call us on 0181 0181 995 9323 ASTA V1656 ATOL 1922 ATTO

ITALY
Traditional country villas with swimming pool. Discover the 'green heart' of Italy with our flexible, fly-drive holidays, staying in a choice of charming intimate hotels. Painting, art & architecture and cosy holidays plus short breaks to Florence. For info on breaks, please call us on 0181 0181 995 9323 ASTA V1656 ATOL 1922 ATTO

France

france '96
A superb selection of over 1000 self-catering cottages, villas and chalets.

01752 670067 **France** **holidays**

ALL DATES. S.W. France. Super house, private pool & lake. Sips 10, 3 bathrooms. Tel. 01242 123666.

LOT DORDOGNE Charmingly restored farmhouse. Very well equipped. Sips 10. Lge pool. Tel. 01539 431860. Yarrow 0181 874 9513.

MED/LANGUEDOC Large pool. Fully equipped farmhouses. Large pool. Tel. 01539 431864.

DORDOGNE Converted Barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 431864. Tel. 01252 994460.

CHARENTE MARITIME Maritime & Royal 6 beds & 2 bath. Close to beach. Garden. 01947 605723 ASTA ATOL 2005.

FRENCH ALPS Converted barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 710585.

ITALY
The complete selection caters to coast, Villas, Farmhouses, Castles, Charming Apartments, Apartments, S.Pools with T.A. Apts. in Venice, Florence and Rome. Excellent prices, knowledge & service as we deal directly with the owners. Please for free brochure.

0161 707 8795

ITALY
Traditional country villas with swimming pool. Discover the 'green heart' of Italy with our flexible, fly-drive holidays, staying in a choice of charming intimate hotels. Painting, art & architecture and cosy holidays plus short breaks to Florence. For info on breaks, please call us on 0181 0181 995 9323 ASTA V1656 ATOL 1922 ATTO

France

france '96
A superb selection of over 1000 self-catering cottages, villas and chalets.

01752 670067 **France** **holidays**

ALL DATES. S.W. France. Super house, private pool & lake. Sips 10, 3 bathrooms. Tel. 01242 123666.

LOT DORDOGNE Charmingly restored farmhouse. Very well equipped. Sips 10. Lge pool. Tel. 01539 431860. Yarrow 0181 874 9513.

MED/LANGUEDOC Large pool. Fully equipped farmhouses. Large pool. Tel. 01539 431864.

DORDOGNE Converted Barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 431864. Tel. 01252 994460.

CHARENTE MARITIME Maritime & Royal 6 beds & 2 bath. Close to beach. Garden. 01947 605723 ASTA ATOL 2005.

FRENCH ALPS Converted barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 710585.

ITALY
The complete selection caters to coast, Villas, Farmhouses, Castles, Charming Apartments, Apartments, S.Pools with T.A. Apts. in Venice, Florence and Rome. Excellent prices, knowledge & service as we deal directly with the owners. Please for free brochure.

0161 707 8795

ITALY
Traditional country villas with swimming pool. Discover the 'green heart' of Italy with our flexible, fly-drive holidays, staying in a choice of charming intimate hotels. Painting, art & architecture and cosy holidays plus short breaks to Florence. For info on breaks, please call us on 0181 0181 995 9323 ASTA V1656 ATOL 1922 ATTO

France

france '96
A superb selection of over 1000 self-catering cottages, villas and chalets.

01752 670067 **France** **holidays**

ALL DATES. S.W. France. Super house, private pool & lake. Sips 10, 3 bathrooms. Tel. 01242 123666.

LOT DORDOGNE Charmingly restored farmhouse. Very well equipped. Sips 10. Lge pool. Tel. 01539 431860. Yarrow 0181 874 9513.

MED/LANGUEDOC Large pool. Fully equipped farmhouses. Large pool. Tel. 01539 431864.

DORDOGNE Converted Barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 431864. Tel. 01252 994460.

CHARENTE MARITIME Maritime & Royal 6 beds & 2 bath. Close to beach. Garden. 01947 605723 ASTA ATOL 2005.

FRENCH ALPS Converted barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 710585.

ITALY
The complete selection caters to coast, Villas, Farmhouses, Castles, Charming Apartments, Apartments, S.Pools with T.A. Apts. in Venice, Florence and Rome. Excellent prices, knowledge & service as we deal directly with the owners. Please for free brochure.

0161 707 8795

ITALY
Traditional country villas with swimming pool. Discover the 'green heart' of Italy with our flexible, fly-drive holidays, staying in a choice of charming intimate hotels. Painting, art & architecture and cosy holidays plus short breaks to Florence. For info on breaks, please call us on 0181 0181 995 9323 ASTA V1656 ATOL 1922 ATTO

France

france '96
A superb selection of over 1000 self-catering cottages, villas and chalets.

01752 670067 **France** **holidays**

ALL DATES. S.W. France. Super house, private pool & lake. Sips 10, 3 bathrooms. Tel. 01242 123666.

LOT DORDOGNE Charmingly restored farmhouse. Very well equipped. Sips 10. Lge pool. Tel. 01539 431860. Yarrow 0181 874 9513.

MED/LANGUEDOC Large pool. Fully equipped farmhouses. Large pool. Tel. 01539 431864.

DORDOGNE Converted Barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 431864. Tel. 01252 994460.

CHARENTE MARITIME Maritime & Royal 6 beds & 2 bath. Close to beach. Garden. 01947 605723 ASTA ATOL 2005.

FRENCH ALPS Converted barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 710585.

ITALY
The complete selection caters to coast, Villas, Farmhouses, Castles, Charming Apartments, Apartments, S.Pools with T.A. Apts. in Venice, Florence and Rome. Excellent prices, knowledge & service as we deal directly with the owners. Please for free brochure.

0161 707 8795

ITALY
Traditional country villas with swimming pool. Discover the 'green heart' of Italy with our flexible, fly-drive holidays, staying in a choice of charming intimate hotels. Painting, art & architecture and cosy holidays plus short breaks to Florence. For info on breaks, please call us on 0181 0181 995 9323 ASTA V1656 ATOL 1922 ATTO

France

france '96
A superb selection of over 1000 self-catering cottages, villas and chalets.

01752 670067 **France** **holidays**

ALL DATES. S.W. France. Super house, private pool & lake. Sips 10, 3 bathrooms. Tel. 01242 123666.

LOT DORDOGNE Charmingly restored farmhouse. Very well equipped. Sips 10. Lge pool. Tel. 01539 431860. Yarrow 0181 874 9513.

MED/LANGUEDOC Large pool. Fully equipped farmhouses. Large pool. Tel. 01539 431864.

DORDOGNE Converted Barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 431864. Tel. 01252 994460.

CHARENTE MARITIME Maritime & Royal 6 beds & 2 bath. Close to beach. Garden. 01947 605723 ASTA ATOL 2005.

FRENCH ALPS Converted barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 710585.

ITALY
The complete selection caters to coast, Villas, Farmhouses, Castles, Charming Apartments, Apartments, S.Pools with T.A. Apts. in Venice, Florence and Rome. Excellent prices, knowledge & service as we deal directly with the owners. Please for free brochure.

0161 707 8795

ITALY
Traditional country villas with swimming pool. Discover the 'green heart' of Italy with our flexible, fly-drive holidays, staying in a choice of charming intimate hotels. Painting, art & architecture and cosy holidays plus short breaks to Florence. For info on breaks, please call us on 0181 0181 995 9323 ASTA V1656 ATOL 1922 ATTO

France

france '96
A superb selection of over 1000 self-catering cottages, villas and chalets.

01752 670067 **France** **holidays**

ALL DATES. S.W. France. Super house, private pool & lake. Sips 10, 3 bathrooms. Tel. 01242 123666.

LOT DORDOGNE Charmingly restored farmhouse. Very well equipped. Sips 10. Lge pool. Tel. 01539 431860. Yarrow 0181 874 9513.

MED/LANGUEDOC Large pool. Fully equipped farmhouses. Large pool. Tel. 01539 431864.

DORDOGNE Converted Barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 431864. Tel. 01252 994460.

CHARENTE MARITIME Maritime & Royal 6 beds & 2 bath. Close to beach. Garden. 01947 605723 ASTA ATOL 2005.

FRENCH ALPS Converted barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 710585.

ITALY
The complete selection caters to coast, Villas, Farmhouses, Castles, Charming Apartments, Apartments, S.Pools with T.A. Apts. in Venice, Florence and Rome. Excellent prices, knowledge & service as we deal directly with the owners. Please for free brochure.

0161 707 8795

ITALY
Traditional country villas with swimming pool. Discover the 'green heart' of Italy with our flexible, fly-drive holidays, staying in a choice of charming intimate hotels. Painting, art & architecture and cosy holidays plus short breaks to Florence. For info on breaks, please call us on 0181 0181 995 9323 ASTA V1656 ATOL 1922 ATTO

France

france '96
A superb selection of over 1000 self-catering cottages, villas and chalets.

01752 670067 **France** **holidays**

ALL DATES. S.W. France. Super house, private pool & lake. Sips 10, 3 bathrooms. Tel. 01242 123666.

LOT DORDOGNE Charmingly restored farmhouse. Very well equipped. Sips 10. Lge pool. Tel. 01539 431860. Yarrow 0181 874 9513.

MED/LANGUEDOC Large pool. Fully equipped farmhouses. Large pool. Tel. 01539 431864.

DORDOGNE Converted Barn Sips 4-5. Tel. 01539 431864. Tel. 01252 994460.

CHARENTE MARITIME Maritime & Royal 6 beds & 2 bath. Close to beach. Garden. 01947 605723 ASTA ATOL

Sometimes, only the best will do

Tropical flowers in the bedroom, lunch brought to the beach. That's Mustique. By Rosie Millard

Mow I don't wish to knock all those budget guidebooks that tell you how to crash out in Manhattan for a dollar, or give tips on how to create a tasty meal of lentils while on a bike. But sometimes a holiday of hedonism is all that will do. I mean glamour; the sort of trip that requires nail varnish and dressing up for dinner.

Barbados, with its true winter "season", is a good contender. "Our season runs from mid-December to mid-April," says Trevor Ramsay, owner of the Treasure Beach Hotel on the western side of the island. "It's a little more well polished than the season in resorts in places like Africa." The hotel, which consists of 25 private suites, surrounds a pool and garden blooming with hibiscus, bougainvillea and jasmine. You can laze on the beach every day, and drink cocktails and dance to calypso bands every night. Best of all, between November and March, there are no kids under 12. But is there glamour? "Oh yes, we have the stars here. Dave Allen, Brian Ferry. And Mark Pitman was married here. It was in *Hello!*"

Well, quite. But I don't want to have my holiday wrecked by invasions from *Hello!*. I want private luxury, true get-away-from-it-all glamour. So I flew away from Barbados in a nine-seater Cessna and went to the tiny island of Mustique.

There's just one landing strip, carved out between high, heavily wooded mountains. There are no night flights; in emergencies, people on the island simply drive along to the airport and line their cars up with the headlights full on, to provide illumination. The airport itself is a small hut with a bench for Customs, and, weirdly, a lending library, two bamboo bookshelves stacked with titles such as *Fishing with Ray Bergman*. And that's it. Celebrity marriages? I don't think so. The paparazzi have their cameras removed on arrival. Welcome to the most exclusive island in the Caribbean.

Mustique was put on the map by Princess Margaret who was given a plot of land here as a wedding present by Colin Tennant. Tennant had bought the three-mile long island in 1959 for £43,000. It was a lot of money for not very much; an empty wilderness with no fresh water and a rampaging population of mosquitoes (hence the name). But Tennant had a vision and in subsequent years he managed to woo the talented, the artistic and the mega-rich from all over the world in order to achieve it.

Margaret built a villa on her plot of land and brought her social set along for Christmas. Gradually, they too bought their own plots of land and built their villas; and thus began the history of Mustique's glittering exclusivity. You can practically smell it on arrival. Brushed beaches, clipped grass and blue skies frame multi-million dollar houses in a guaranteed mosquito-free atmosphere thanks to frequent visits from sprayer planes. The houses aren't built on the



Yes, it's expensive. But such is the experience that you only need two or three days on the Caribbean Island to feel like a superstar

beaches. They don't need to be. These people have their own pools, their own jacuzzis, they even come equipped with golf-simulation cinemas equipped just so you can practise your swing. Who lives here? Oh, the Jagers, royalty, Swiss bankers. Serious money. "Didn't you know that David Bowie's just sold up, for four?" Four what? Thousands? Hundreds of thousands? "No, stupid. Millions." In Mustique, everyone speaks in multiples of six zeros.

For mere mortals, Mustique is probably the best place in the world where you can still play at being a superstar for a week.

More private club than resort, this is one place in the Caribbean where parties from cruise ships are not welcome. There's only

one hotel, for a start. The Cotton House, an 18th-century coral and stone cotton warehouse that was taken over by Tennant and used as his HQ in the Sixties, is now a deluxe hotel and centre of the island's social scene.

Decorated in a somewhat outrageous style by the theatrical designer Oliver Messel, the Cotton House now has 20 suites dotted about the grounds surrounding the main building, and a reputation for service that relegates the average five-star British hotel to something approximating a motorway service station.

Oh yes, there's all the regular luxuries like tropical flowers in the bedroom, ice-buckets changed regularly and cocktails on arrival, but lunch brought by hand to whichever beach you desire? Surely some mistake? Not at all. If you wish to pretend that you're in some Fleming-esque fantasy, you can do so. A brief word at breakfast by the pool is all that's necessary. So after a morning swimming, snorkelling or going for a gallop along one of the island's pure white, combed beaches, you simply plonk yourself down on the appointed seat with a towel and plenty of factor 25 and wait for nourishment. At the pre-arranged moment, it will arrive.

British people not used to this sort of treatment might find Mustique hard to swallow. It's also rather expensive: the price for a room for two per night can rival the cost of your transatlantic flight. But you only need two or three days here, so intense is the experience. After lunch on the beach, full English tea is served in the main dining room. The room still has Colin Tennant's original decorations: armchairs studded with cowrie shells are flanked by Indian chests and stuffed birds in glass cases. Every day at tea-time, triangular sandwiches arrive on trays, plus *petits fours*, banana bread and Caribbean tea with condensed milk.

Every Tuesday night the management of the Cotton House invites hotel guests and anyone else currently staying on the island, to a cocktail party. Unlike with most "drinks with the management" invitations, everyone turns up. Mustique is so small and the amusements on the island are so limited, that there's not much else to do. So you could end up having drinks with Mick Jagger, Spike Lee, David and Serena Liley, and Billy Joel, all at the same time. Then you get invited to pop back to their pads for dinner. It happens. "Don't take it too seriously," we are warned. "Casual informal elegance. Wear your little black dress if you like, but with bare feet." Bare feet? For dancing on the beach. But don't forget to have a pedicure.

Rosie Millard paid £300 for a London-Barbados ticket through Golden Lion Travel (01293 567800). The Treasure Beach in Barbados and the Cotton House in Mustique are both bookable in the UK through Unique Hotels (01453 835801). At Treasure Beach, the cheapest room until 12 April is £278 without meals; from 13 April, the price halves to £134. From now until mid-April, a deluxe room at the Cotton House costs £370 half-board including tax. During the low season (16 April-15 December), the price falls to £253.

The Wildest Dreams Travel Challenge

The biggest obstacle to independent travel is cost. So Heineken Export, in association with the Independent, is offering a travel bursary of up to £25,000.

Who can enter?

Anyone aged 18-35.

How to enter

Application forms will be assessed by a panel of experts. Forms are available from the special hotline number 0171-231 5432; the Lonely Planet Internet <http://www.lonelyplanet.com.au>; or at STA Travel shops.

When to enter

By 26 April. Winners will be announced on 5 May. If you are planning to leave before then, we will be making interim awards.

How much is the prize?

Awards are at the judges' discretion. One exceptional proposal (say a tour of the 177 countries where Heineken Export is available) could win the full amount...

Last station: Gunnislake

Simon Calder travels on a coast-embracing branch line that, miraculously, has escaped the cuts

Devon and Cornwall have some glorious railways, such as the elegant, lazy arc carved around St Michael's Bay by the Penzance train, and the coast-embracing line from Teignmouth to Dawlish. But the real aficionado is travelling on one of the shorter, stubbier stretches.

There are two ways to travel to Cornwall by train and the thousands of holidaymakers rumbling across Brunel's strident Royal Albert Bridge aboard InterCity 125s have chosen the lesser option. Secklers of scenery, railway history and solitude choose the Tamar Valley line.

Quite how this 14-mile zig-zag of track has survived round after round of railway cutbacks is hard to explain. On the day last week when I travelled on it, we passengers played out a 2-2 draw with the crew. Even at the frightful cost of 27 pence a mile I was paying, it is hard to see how Regional Railways can keep the line going.

Yet six days a week (and on summer Sundays), a two-coach train sets off from Plymouth to explore the river valley that

divides Devon from Cornwall. You plod through the sorry cityscapes punctuated by pauses at Dockyard and Devonport, through stations whose antiquated names are sometimes longer than the platform needed for these two-coach shuttles. St Budeaux Victoria Road takes its place with Lympstone Commando among the more ambitiously named Devonian stations.

You train diverts from the line leading across the Tamar here, and immediately the tone changes. The austere subterfuge gives way to grand views across to Cornwall – a collage of steeply wooded slopes sliding into sharp, black water.

In its promotional material, the railway company erroneously describes it as: "One of England's loveliest branch lines". Yet only the last short segment was originally a branch. The stretch as far as Bere Alston, a truly heroic link between Plymouth and London, was built by the London & South Western Railway. Bere Alston was Devon's own Clapham Junction, where the Gunnislake branch darted off from the impen-

etrance main line. "Up trains" to London wheezed uphill towards Tavistock and skirted around the northern fringe of Dartmoor to reach the capital. Now the sole purpose of the station is as a reversing point, from which the train sets off to cross the Tamar into Cornwall.

Calstock could be the epicentre of the heritage industry. Its sturdy cottages simper prettily beneath the arm of a mathematically exact viaduct across the river. That the first village in Cornwall manages to elude the twin in favour of the Newtonian perfection of the viaduct is evident to everyone except passengers. Your £3.80 ticket entitles you to get off, look around and wait two hours for the next train.

The last two miles along the Gunnislake branch climbs several hundred feet into the Cornish hills. The train hauls itself into a station which is more municipal car park than great railway terminus. We passengers alight, leaving Regional Railways £7.60 better off – but us tourists much the richer.

The Waterways of Russia

The opening of the waterways between St Petersburg and Moscow allows us to link a visit to two great cities with a relaxing cruise that travel the Neva River, Lake Ladoga, the Svir River, Lake Onega, the Baltic Canal, White Lake, the Volga River and finally the Moscow and Volga Canal. This intricate system of waterways has a beauty that is hard to describe. The serene, peaceful and timeless with silver birch and pine forests, sandy shores, calm flowing water and spectacular late sunsets, in these realms of the "White Nights". Calls will be at such historic towns as Lübeck where the blue cupolas decorated with the golden stars of the riverside church make a stunning landmark.

For this journey we have selected the MS Karamzin which, although not as high a standard as our other vessel the MV Arion, offers very good facilities considering the competitive tariff. This 14-night tour will therefore appeal to those wishing to see unspoilt parts of Russia from an economical and comfortable base.

ITINERARY IN BRIEF

Day 1 Fly from Gdansk to Moscow and embark the MS Karamzin. Day 2 City tour of Moscow. Day 3 Afternoon tour of the Kremlin including the Armoury. Day 4 Day free before sailing in the late afternoon. Day 5 Visit Lübeck. Day 6 Visit Kos-



linking St Petersburg and Moscow along the quiet rivers, lakes and canals of Russia

14 nights from £935.00

Day 7 Visit Yaroslavl. Day 8 Visit Irkut. Day 9 Visit Goritsy. Day 10 Visit Kizhi Island. Day 11 Visit Svir Stroy. Day 12 Arrive St Petersburg. Afternoon visit to the Hermitage. Day 13 Morning excursion to Pushkin. Day 14 Day at leisure. Day 15 Fly from St Petersburg to Gdansk.

DEPARTURE DATES & PRICES

Saturdays per person in a twin

Moscow to St Petersburg - May 25 & August 3

St Petersburg to Moscow - Jun 8 & Aug 17

All departures £935.00

Supplements per person

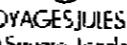
Single cabin £300 - Main Deck £455

Upper Deck £550 - Boat Deck £620

Price includes air travel, full board, excursions, laundry, all

transportation, service of cruise director. Not included travel insurance, airport taxes, visa, tips. All prices are subject to change.

0171-6161000



VOYAGES JULES VERNE

21 Dorset Square, London NW1 2CG

Tourist Promotions Ltd ABTA 1601 ATOL 5028

Our offices are open 9.00-17.00 hrs, except Saturday 10.00-16.00 hrs. For general information, our office hours are 9.00-17.00 hrs, except Saturday 10.00-16.00 hrs.

Romantic Reykjavik, or Red Hot City Break?

2 nights from £246 (from Heathrow)

3 nights from £233 (from Glasgow)

Hot Lagoon bathing, a candle-lit dinner and dance

the night away in Reykjavik's famous night spots.

Then the big surprise – hot geysers, volcanoes and

stunning waterfalls just a short tour from your

doorstep – all just over 21 hrs flight away. Price

inc: flights, hotel accommodation, and

local taxes. (Quickly weekends

1 night from £199).

See your local travel agent or call

our 24-hr Brochure Line on

01426 933 365 and ask for the

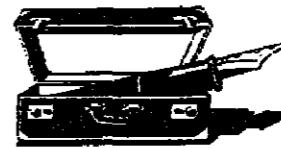
Reykjavik Breakaway brochure. Or

call Icelandair on 0171 388 5999.

ICELANDAIR

ICELANDAIR

something to declare



A likely story

"Privatisation will result in maintained consistency in our on-time performance" - LIAT Islander, the inflight magazine of Leeward Islands Air Transport

This claim, if true, is not good news for those accustomed to LIAT's consistent unreliability. But aficionados of the Caribbean's uniquely unpredictable airline will be relieved to hear that the recent sell-off has done nothing to change its style. Over the years stranded passengers have had ample time to invent alternatives for its acronym: Leaving Island At Any Time, Luggage In Another Terminal or Late If At All.

A recent trip through the Eastern Caribbean reminded me of why the airline inspires a BR-style mix of affection and loathing among its users. Its most quixotic habit is not to display departure times, since this would make it a hostage to fortune. One therefore depends on announcements, which are normally inaudible and timed to coincide with the arrival of an incoming jet. In St Kitts, one announcement announced that an announcement would shortly tell us what had happened to our missing plane. Departing passengers have been known to rush out onto

James Ferguson

Trouble spots

The week's advice from our man in the Foreign Office

Russia: the advice remains the same as it was before this week's killing of British businessman in a St Petersburg hotel. "Incidents of mugging, theft and pickpocketing are increasing in all cities, especially St Petersburg and Moscow. Be vigilant and dress down. Be particularly wary in Moscow of groups of young vagrants."

Sri Lanka: "Fighting is continuing in the north and east. Do not visit these areas. The south and centre, including all the main tourist areas and the 'Cultural Triangle', remain largely unaffected. Further information may be obtained direct from the British High Commission in Colombo (tel 437336, fax 430308).

Yemen: "Armed theft of vehicles, particularly of four-wheel-drive models, is not uncommon. The risk of random kidnapping remains. In January 1994 a group of French tourists was held. As in other incidents the tourists were released unharmed after several days. There remains some danger from mines laid during the civil war in the southern and eastern governorates."

Ethiopia: "Visitors should confine themselves to the recognised tourist areas including the Rift Valley lakes, Addis Ababa and the Highland tourist route. Avoid travel after dark and take accommodation only in the larger towns."

Foreign Office travel advice is available on 0171-270 4129; on BBS-2 Cetex page 564 onwards; and on the Internet at <http://www.fco.gov.uk/>

Bargain of the week

Pricing a fly-drive holiday to America can be a slippery business; often the extras add up to more than the basic air fare. But Jetset (0990 555757) says its April special to California will cost precisely £319, plus £15 (£10) payable locally for state tax. The deal is

based on two people travelling together. It provides Heathrow-Los Angeles flights on Air New Zealand between 11 and 29 April, and a week's car rental. The price includes including taxes, collision damage waiver, airport surcharges and unlimited mileage.

Weekend break

£299

motoring

road test
Alfa Romeo



There are things you probably expect from an Alfa Romeo, even if you have no personal experience. You expect it to look good, you'll have heard dark mutterings from enthusiasts that Alfas handle well, and you probably imagine them in red, like Ferraris. Most importantly, you expect a great engine, because that's what gives an Alfa its *Cuore Sportivo* – its sporting heart.

Into the range-topping Cloverleaf goes the 150bhp two-litre, twin-spark straight four which, along with fab styling, forms the foundation of the current Alfa renaissance. On to that is bolted a new five-speed gearbox, while the suspension is lowered by 10mm all round, fatter rubber is fitted and the steering improved.

Around town, sufficient low-rev urge and a blackish-free driveline make the Cloverleaf a doodle to drive, while out on the windy bits the engine reaches eagerly for 6500rpm with a pleasing mechanical fizz. Responsive and refined, it is swift and handles even better than its booted sister, the 1.6lit. A cracking motor car.

James May

Specifications

Alfa Romeo 145 Cloverleaf
£14,884.40
2.0 litre straight-four engine.
150bhp, five-speed manual gearbox.
Top speed 130 mph. 0-100 kmh
(62mph) 8.4 sec. average fuel
consumption 34.2 mpg

Rivals

Volkswagen Golf 2.0 GTI 16v 3-door, £15,575
Honda Civic 1.6VTi 3-door, £15,495
Peugeot 306 XS 2.0 3-door, £13,910
Ford Escort RS 2000, £13,995

motoring

Car Hire

Car Hire



Performance and Prestige Rentals

Turn the dream into reality for yourself or as the perfect gift.

We deliver anywhere in the UK

FREEPHONE
0800
371857

FOR MORE DETAILS

A DREAM

***£695
Per Day**

***£1995
Per Week**

***£355
Per Day**

***£797
Per Week**

Call for prices on: Lotus Esprit Turbo's, BMW's, Mercedes, Bentley Turbo, 300ZX, TVR's, etc

FOR HIRE

* Prices Exclude Delivery Charge & Insurance

Cars for Sale

MS INTERNATIONAL

ODICH Stream (89)	ESSEN WORKS MINOR (79)	£1500
METRO 1.3 (89)	ESSEN SUBARU GL 1.3 4wd (89)	£2000
216 (85) 7seater	ESSEN 900 GTi Auto (89)	£44,995
MONDEO (89) P4S	ESSEN PESTA (89) (89)	£2700
FIAT PANDA (89)	ESSEN AX BEAUTY (89) FSL	£4000
RELIANT HALTO (89)	ESSEN PUNTO 1.0 (89) Grey	£3000
RENAULT 21 (89) Gold	ESSEN 1.3 16v (89) Upgraded	£2200
LAGUNA 1.6 (89)	ESSEN 1.3 16v (89) (89)	£3000
ORION GHA (81)	ESSEN 1.2 16v (89) (89)	£3000
SUNNY (89) 1.3	ESSEN 1.3 16v (89) (89)	£3000
ODICH Stream (89)	ESSEN 1.3 16v (89) (89)	£3000
METRO 1.3 (89) 4wd	ESSEN 1.3 16v (89) (89)	£3000
HONDA ACCORD (87)	ESSEN ASTRA SPORT (89)	£1000
Clio 1.7 (91) 5seater	ESSEN 205 GTi (89)	£1400
340 GL (89)	ESSEN ASTRAS (89) (89)	£3000
ASTRA 1.6i (89)	ESSEN CAVALIER LX (89) Red	£1150
CALIBER SR (87)	ESSEN METRO CITY X (89)	£1000
VITARA JX SE (89)	ESSEN 1.6 16v (89) (89)	£2000
BMW 1600 (73)	ESSEN AUDI 80 SPORT (89)	£1400
ESCA SPECIAL (89)	ESSEN CORINTH 2000E Auto	£1500
PISTA BONITA (83)	ESSEN BX RE (89) Silver	£1000
PISTA CLO (89)	ESSEN CLO (89) Grey	£1000
PISTA DIA (89)	ESSEN DIA (89) (89)	£1000
SUNbeam Alpine (82)	ESSEN MAESTRO CLEVER (89)	£2200
Y22 (81) 5dr	ESSEN MAESTRO 11 GTi (89)	£1400
SIERRA LX (89)	ESSEN MONTEGO (89) (89)	£800
MAESTRO AUTO (87)	ESSEN SAPPHIRE (89) Red	£1500
DRON 1.5 1.8 16v	ESSEN MONTEGO (89) (89)	£2000
FIAT X19 (88)	ESSEN MONTEGO (89) (89)	£2000
ORION GHA (81)	ESSEN PEUGEOT 205 (89)	£1000

0114 256 0738

Cars available nationwide at Private prices

Car Accessories

weissenfels

Probably the world's easiest fitting snow chains.

DON'T GET CAUGHT OUT THIS WINTER

For our colour brochures Tel: (01732) 884408

Shoewhines Ltd., Wrotham Road, Borough Green, Kent TN15 8TG

4 Wheel Drive

Jeep

HADLEIGH

Carport

12 Used & Pre-Registered K-M

5 Used Vans

Excellent Stock Levels

Constantly Updated

Customer Feedback

320 London Road, Hadleigh,

Essex SS7 200

01702 555589

To advertise

in this section

please call

David Owen on

0171 293 2338.

MARKET RESEARCH											
33 DAISY HILL DRIVE, CHORLEY PRG 9NE											
ABA 817	1,650	DA 71	4,500	845	3,250	LES 19X	595	REG 944X	600		
1833 AC	1,950	944 DBC	1,250	14 GA	4,250	2,950	864 RA	2,950			
AEH 63A	395	DEB 13	6,000	AIR ADD	500	(LIEUTENANT)	107 RH	1,850			
AH 2250	2,250	793 DHC	950	(AL GADD)	LS 599	2,950	695 RHN	950			
AJM 338A	295	937 DJB	1,850	GH 13Y	425	LS 7927	1,850	950			
835 ALX	1,350	1835 DK	1,450	93 GLB	1,250	2 MA	6,000	RKG 550	975		
(ALEX)		80 DPM	1,250	93 GLS	1,250	MAO 968	1,250	RTE 312	945		
50 AM	7,250	934 ECR	1,250	93 GLT	1,250	93 NSA	595	32 SH	6,000		
AM 28	8,250	934 ECR	1,250	93 GLT	1,250	(MENSA)	595	SRG 7	2,950		
4502 AP	1,350	24 ENR	1,250	93 GLT	1,250	6880 ML	1,450	SS 582	2,950		
581 APK	1,650	61 EPD	950	(HANNON)	5,000	NC 200	2,950	SS 582	2,950		
969 AUB	925	88 ERP	1,250	II HD	26,000	NC 200	2,950	SS 582	2,950		
(AUBREV)		II ER	1,250	16 H	26,000	NC 200	2,950	SS 582	2,950		
44 AW	1,750	ESU 437	435	HK 47A	1,850	NS 741	POA	THU 65	3,500		
80 BAM	2,250	FAS POA	1,250	HR 69	1,850	PAM 502Y	495	87 TMT	950		
BH 2833	1,850	160 FAS	1,250	JG 10	1,850	AB PHK	2,950	750	TSV 75	395	
633 BHJ	1,500	160 FAS	1,250	JK 760	2,950	FOR 20,000	UV 10	2,950			
BMW 149	2,450	JU FCA	1,250	JK 760	2,950	IPW 326	1,250	VCK 38	1,450		
BMW 442	2,450	JU FCA	1,250	JK 760	2,950	PXW 332	395	(VIC OR VICKI)	1,450		
BOB 18	5,750	JU FCA	1,250	JK 760	2,950	RAV 40X	635	WJ 5494	1,350		
BOB 523K	550	JU FCA	1,250	JK 760	2,950	RAV 40X	635	WJ 5494	1,350		
7922 CD	1,235	25 FH	3,450	JK 760	2,950	RB 7167	2,650	74 WW	3,250		
All CCL	395	FL 1	22,500	K3 ENE	975	RB 7167	2,650	RBR 338	1,745		
184 CHR	1,345	All FPL	495	(KEENE)	975	RCH 41	2,950	Y 3462	1,250		
(CHRIS)		All FPL	4,000	KXH 80	395	RCV 8	2,250	Y 3462	1,250		
						357 YKJ	357 YKJ				

PHONE 01257 482305 PHONE

FAX 01257 474745 FAX

MOST ARE PLUS VAT - PLUS FEE FOR TRANSFER

10% DISCOUNT FOR 10000+ V.A.T. - PLUS FEE FOR TRANSFER

10

ider
ding

And the walls came crumbling down

When oil fever came to a small Lancashire community hope sprang eternal. Then the vibrations started. By Jim White

One day in April 1987 Alyson Guest was sitting on the lavatory in of the flat she was renting at one end of a creaking old stone farmhouse in the middle of the Lancashire moor country. Suddenly, and for no apparent reason, she was thrown from the seat by severe wobbling coming from within the porcelain. Leaping up and standing astonished on the other side of the room, Ms Guest noticed that the lavatory, which was bolted directly into the ground, vibrated for some time as if directly wired to a small nuclear power station.

"The vibrations were so severe it was quite impossible to continue," she said, of the task in hand.

Recovering from her shock, and alerted by a rumbling noise outside, Ms Guest ran out into the lane which runs along the front of the house in time to see three trucks slowly winding their way towards the village of Slaidburn. She noted the name on the back of one of the lorries and returned to her business.

The following weekend, Christopher Wenner, a member of the family who owns the house and uses one wing for holidays, came to stay. He noticed, as he turned his car into the yard behind the house that the dry-stone walls which flanked the lane on either side of the building had collapsed. Worse was to follow, opening the front door he was immediately struck by extensive wave-like cracking in previously sound walls and ceilings. There was more severe damage, too: big cracks running up the back of the house, which passed straight through the lintel stones under a couple of windows. One internal split was sufficiently expansive for the water pipes running behind the plaster to be exposed. Wenner was astonished at the damage, which looked as if the whole house had been picked up and shaken. He immediately asked Alyson Guest if anything unusual had happened around the place recently. Well, she said, there was the time she was thrown off the lavatory by these unaccountable vibrations. And then there were the lorries.

Laytham's Farm is over 350 years old, a house built without foundations in the same way as dry-stone walls, with a firm in-fill and plaster on the exterior. In several places the outside walls are bolted together with metal strapping. It is not, as any casual observer might take note, the strongest of constructions...

Nevertheless it commands a magnificent view over the Forest of Bowland to one side and the Hodder Valley to the other. Looking across the fells on a February morning, with the wind whipping the trees as if bent on a mission of revenge, you might think there is not a lot out there on the bleak, battered fells that anyone would be interested in. But in April 1987, Enterprise Oil, the great success com-



Martin Wenner and one of the cracks in his cottage caused by seismic sounding

pany of the Eighties (which in 1990 was named as paying its staff more than anyone else in Britain) were very interested in the place. They thought they sniffed oil.

Unlike in the title sequence of the TV series *The Beverly Hill-Billies*, when Jed Clampett goes out shootin' at some food, and up from the ground comes a bubblin' crude, if there was oil round Bowland way it was well out of gunshot range. So Enterprise contracted a firm called Simon Horizon, who had in their possession several Vibroseis wagons. A German machine with an enormous circular pad like a giant dustbin lid strapped to its undercarriage, the lorry moves into position.

It didn't take Chris Wenner long to put together a theory as to why his house suddenly resembled a lump of Stilton. Local gossip in Slaidburn was full of oil talk, the seismic soundings and how everyone would benefit when the place was full of free-spending Texans.

Wenner thought he ought to contact Enterprise and see what they had to

say. So, soon after the incident, a helpful and attentive employee of the company, called Mr Aspinall, arrived at Laytham's. He took a look round, noted the splits in the pavement outside, the way the roof of the outhouse was coming away from its walls, and all the interior and exterior damage to the house and satisfied himself that the Wenner's were not trying to pull a fast one. Seismic sounding can cause damage to dry stone walls, he revealed, indeed the company had contracted a full-time wailer to make good any vibration damage throughout the area (hence the manner in which the Wenner's field walls were quickly repaired).

Besides, he added, the sub-contractors were given guidelines, don't vibrate within 100 metres of vulnerable buildings, and the schedule of work he showed Wenner revealed that a test had been done on the lane right outside Laytham's, the front wall of which is only two metres from the tarmac. An open and shut case, Wenner thought.

Nearly nine years later, Martin Wenner - Christopher's brother - stands in the kitchen of Laytham's with a briefcase full of documentation.

"Our costs so far," he says, waving about a wad of papers, "many of them tied with legal red ribbon, 'have touched £30,000. And still there is no sign of a settlement."

"If they are saying that," says Martin, in the resigned tone of one who knows the answer. "Why on earth couldn't the thing have been settled nine years ago when it would have cost about a tenth of what it will cost now?"

Incidentally, during the survey of the Hodder Valley, no oil was found.

Tel: 0171 293 2222

property • residential

Fax: 0171 293 2505

Accommodation Wanted

TWO CONCIOUS COMMITTED SELF FUNDING second year osteopaths at BCNO urgently seek comfortable accommodation in Lancashire. Please refer: Tel: 0171 275 2155

Country Property

Warwickshire nr. Rugby

Stunning 17th century stone built house, situated on edge of village. Sitting room, dining room, kitchen, breakfast room, two double bedrooms, two single bedrooms, bathroom with shower, half bath, double garage, oil ch, double garage, workshop, well laid out gardens.

£160,000

Tel: 01788 890700

Dorset/Hampshire

THE COUNTY HOMESEARCH CO.
For a brochure on how our professional, personal, independent, service can find and secure your ideal property, please Tel: 01362 715755

France

FRENCH PROPERTY NEWS
monthly, for your free copy Tel: 0181 9471824

LOT: Well converted farmhouses, 4 acres of hillside in quiet village. All mod cons, swimming pool, sleep 28. Tel: 0181 9711748

FOCUS ON FRANCE Magazine. For free copy Tel: 0181 542 0688

London Property

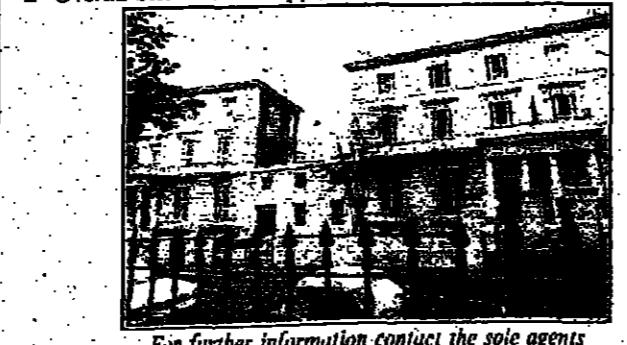
GOULD & COMPANY

CHARTERED SURVEYORS
21 & 22 The Boltons, London SW10

A UNIQUE OPPORTUNITY TO PURCHASE THE FREEHOLD OF

Two adjoining houses in The Boltons

- Double Garage
- Large Rear Extension (as present housing, chapel & other accommodation)
- Large Garden
- Overall Site Area of Approx 0.50 acres (0.202 ha)



For further information contact the sole agents

Gould & Company,
Museum House,
Museum Street,
London WC1A 1JT

Telephone: 0171 637 8951

REGENT'S CANAL HOUSE

London, E11

Brand New

Docklands

APARTMENTS

From £82,450

PENTHOUSES

£112,150

A selection of large two and three bedroom apartments, some with extensive views across

Lambeth Basin & Canary Wharf.

RENTAL £1,000 - £1,500

FOURTH FLOOR

WITH-PROFITS BOND

22

money

An investment that offers the best of both worlds.

Are you one of the thousands of savers about to receive a cash windfall as the first payments are made from tax-free TESSA accounts?

Before reinvesting any of your money you should stop and consider all the options available to you. Five years on from your initial choice, your circumstances have probably changed and another TESSA may not necessarily be the best option.

The Equitable Life is able to offer you an alternative investment. The Equitable With-Profits Bond.

With £500 or more you can invest in a managed fund of assets, which smooths the short-term fluctuations in value over the period of your investment.

You also have our guarantee that, whatever the future market conditions are like, at the fifth and subsequent anniversaries you can encash your Bond for its original value plus bonuses accrued.

What is more, you have the reassurance of dealing with The Equitable Life, the world's oldest mutual life office.

For more information by post and by telephone on The Equitable Life With-Profits Bond call Aylesbury (01296) 38 48 58 or return the coupon below.

Information, advice will only be given on Equitable group products.

Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

THE EQUITABLE LIFE INSURANCE COMPANY LTD, 100 BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HIGH STREET, AYLESBURY, BUCKINGHAMSHIRE HP21 1BR

To The Equitable Life, FREEPOST, Water Street, AYLESBURY, Bucks HP21 1BR

I would welcome information on The Equitable With-Profits Bond.

INB16A

NAME: Mr/Ms/Mrs: _____

ADDRESS: _____

Tel. (Office): _____ Postcode: _____

Tel. (Home): _____

Date of Birth: _____



The Equitable Life

You profit from our principles

The 'tax-free' tag is a powerful marketing tool for PEPs, even if for most investors the actual gains from putting their equity investments in a PEP is limited.

Nobody who opens a newspaper these days can doubt that this is the time of year for personal equity plans, or PEPs. With the end of the tax year barely a month away, the marketing effort by providers of PEPs is at its customary annual peak.

As a nation, it seems, most of us are unable to do anything with potential tax benefits until the last minute, and the suppliers of PEPs are naturally doing all they can to cash in on this most human of failings.

There is nothing much wrong with that. It is clear that PEPs have proved a worthwhile innovation since they were launched a few years ago. True, their global impact on savings patterns has been fairly marginal. The majority of people still prefer the security of building society savings schemes such as TESSAs, to the potential roller-coaster ride of UK and European stockmarkets. But they have done a good deal to increase public awareness of the value of pooled equity investment.

The 'tax-free' tag is a powerful marketing tool, even if for most investors the actual gains from putting their equity investments in a PEP is limited. For a long time, high charges ate up most of the tax savings investors made on their dividend payments. The people who really benefit from PEPs are those who have capital gains tax liabilities to shield, and that is still not a large number.

Overall, in a buoyant equity market, the arrival of PEPs has made a sizeable splash, vacuuming up tens of billions of pounds since their launch in 1987. The scale of investment has also been boosted by concessions from a succession of Chancellors.

The growing competition to provide low cost no frills PEPs – for example, index-tracking funds – is one of the most encouraging developments. The problem facing most investors now is that the choice of PEPs has become bewilderingly large.

The latest guide by Chase de Vere, for example, lists no fewer than 1,190 different PEPs, and picking the right one is not an easy task. This is caused by the determination on the part of fund managers to pull in as much money as they can. To do this, they launch funds that are – despite all their claims – almost identical to those of their rivals, multi-

JONATHAN DAVIS INVESTMENTS



management groups (M&G, Newton and Perpetual).

In this sector there seems to have been little competition so far on price. Nearly all have relatively high initial charges and pay good commissions to intermediaries, but their performance has also been good, so presumably investors are mostly happy to pay the extra costs, or may be unaware of how much they are being charged.

The investment trust PEP table shows that, of the trust which responded to the survey, the one that had attracted most funds is none of the better known names, but Alliance, the Dundee-based investment trust company which is the byword for Scottish parsimony.

This is a quality, in my opinion, which investors should rate more highly than they sometimes do. The two investment trusts Alliance runs have done well for their shareholders for many years – nothing flashy, but solid, consistent performance at or above the market average – and rightly have a loyal following.

Investment trust PEPs generally are cheaper than their unit trust equivalents, but have long suffered from a lower profile in marketing. Apart from Alliance, other substantial investment trust PEP funds are those run by Schroders, Murray Johnstone and Duncraig (which is in the process of being taken over by Edinburgh Fund Managers).

Index tracking funds will, it seems certain, do well over the next few years, and as this is essentially a commodity market, you will expect the bulk of the funds to go to firms that can provide the cheapest product, or have some other reason – such as the Virgin brand – for winning a customer following.

Trackers, are by definition supposed to follow the market, although of course individual companies will tell you that each of them does it in a way designed to ensure better investment returns. Even so, if you've seen one tracker, you've seen them all, or just about, which is why these funds compete on price.

Among the higher income PEPs, the biggest funds, in order, are M&G, Clerical Medical, Newton, Schroders, Perpetual and Allied Dunbar. It is hard to discern much of a pattern there, although it is interesting that they include at least three of the best specialist stock-picking fund



LOOSE CHANGE

Scotish Amicable is launching an investment bond which guarantees original investment back plus 10 per cent, after five and a half years. Half the money is invested in a fund tracking the FT-SE 100 share index, with the rest in fixed interest stocks. Minimum investment is £5,000. Call 01534 24365 for details.

Fidelity Brokerage is offering a 'bed-and-breakfast' share-dealing service aimed at minimising capital gains tax liabilities. The firm says a deal valued at £5,000 would cost a customer £50 in com-

mission. Call 0800 222190 for more information.

Alliance & Leicester is launching a new range of discounted and fixed rate mortgages, including a one-year discount of 4.5 per cent on a 95 per cent loan-to-value rate, bringing the cost down to 2.99 per cent. Two-year discounts of 2.6 per cent are available, bringing the current mortgage down to 4.89 per cent.

The State has less and less money for Welfare.

How will you cope in old age?

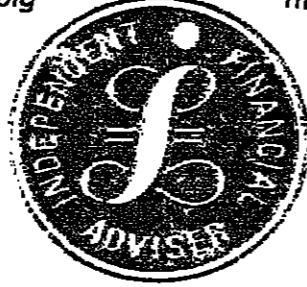


It makes uncomfortable

telling, but with more of the British population living to a greater age, there is going to be a big demand on the State's welfare services, and fewer working taxpayers to pay for it.

Inevitably the shortfall is going to have to be made up by the elderly themselves.

How well covered will you be? Will you have enough to pay for care, should it become necessary, for



years? The best answer is to talk to an independent financial adviser. He or she will give you expert and impartial advice in plain English.

They'll find a solution for you which is precisely tailored to your circumstances.

Call us today for a copy of our free

information pack. It should make your future look a lot healthier.

0117 971 1177

It's your future. Take control of it.

Send to: IFA Promotion Limited, 17-19 Emery Road, Bristol, BS4 5PF, or call 0117 971 1177. Please send me a free information pack and a list of three independent financial advisers convenient to my work or home address below. (We guarantee that no sales person will call or phone as a result of this coupon.)

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

BN47

This advertisement appears on behalf of Britain's independent financial advisers and has been approved by a person regulated by the Personal Investment Authority. Not all of these products are regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

The Power of Independent Financial Advice

- An impartial choice from over 100 financial advisers
- Expertise in savings, investments, pensions
- A review of your individual circumstances

Wherever you see the blue seal

To: Standard Life Fund Management Limited, FREEPOST EH3245, Edinburgh, EH3 6SW. Please send me written details about Standard Life PEPs.

Name _____

Address _____

Postcode _____

Telephone _____

JG191

Value as at 1.1.96 of £50,000 invested in the Global Fund. Past performance is not a guide to future performance. Unlike a bank or building society account, the value of a PEP is not guaranteed. If the value of your investment falls, you will not receive the value to the investment. Standard Life Fund Management Limited is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.

لماذا لا تفعل

Why do so few people seem to have come across self-invested personal pensions?

MICHAEL ROYDE



A day in the life of a financial adviser

have had a number of clients in to see me over the last few months, who have had to sort out their pension arrangements. I find it quite surprising that so few people have come across self-invested personal pensions (or SIPP's).

These are like normal personal pensions, but the investments may be chosen on an individual basis rather than relying on the funds of any one insurance company.

This allows the financial adviser to pick investment managers who have consistently outperformed the market in each specific area of the world. They also allow the option of investing in property that one may then use to run business activities or rent out.

The first client had made a

medical discovery and wanted to exploit this new idea. He wanted to buy premises in the Chatham area of Kent, but was short of capital. He decided to transfer out of his NHS pension scheme and invest part of the funds in a commercial property from which he could run his business.

The remaining two-thirds were invested in a with-profit fund, which smooths investment returns in good times and bad, in order to provide a safe return for the future.

Because rents in the Chatham area vary considerably, he was able to considerably himself a low rent at the start with the prospect of a substantial increase after a few years. Because the property price was low, the initial return for his pension, the

excluding any potential capital growth, and at the same time reduced the rental cost to Henry's business by £5,000.

The next client, Fiona, was able to retire at 50, but did not require the income, so he decided to defer payment and in order to do so made a transfer of his pension into a SIPP.

In this sort of situation I work closely with an actuary, Ian Walker, who renegotiates the value of the occupational scheme's transfer from

just over £100,000 to almost £200,000. David wanted stock market exposure but required a low risk. I recommended we should make use of guaranteed stock market bonds.

These are pension fund investments with a three-month option to discontinue.

The level of risk may be chosen as either 0, 1 or 2 per cent. The table (left) illustrates the potential gains for each level of risk in four different stock markets for the first three months of this year.

On a 1 per cent risk, say, if the Nikkei falls by 10 per cent during the quarter, the loss is restricted to 99 per cent of a £10,000 investment, so you only lose £100. If the market closed up 10 per cent, the value of the bond goes up 20 per cent to £12,000.

To round off the portfolio, we made use of the best performing UK smaller companies unit trusts, together with a Pacific Rim unit trust.

In addition, we used an emerging market fund which invests in other single-country investment trusts, especially when they are at a discount to net asset value.

This is where the value of the underlying assets within the fund is greater than the value of the investment trust shares.

The fourth client, Norman, is a management consultant, aged 51, whose income is very variable. He had a large paid-up pension with a previous employer, which had been untouched for some six years. He wanted to pay off his mortgage and to be able to draw a variable

income from his annuity. After a lot of argument with the insurer who ran his fund, we managed to transfer out of the occupational scheme to a personal pension on a self-invest basis, with an income withdrawal facility.

He took the maximum tax-free cash of £80,000, which he used to pay off his mortgage. The remaining funds of approximately £300,000 were invested in a mixture of funds.

This allowed Norman to decide whether to draw an annual pension income of between £9,000 and £27,000. When his consultancy income was good he could draw a small pension and when his consultancy income was low he could draw a larger pension. Michael Royde can be contacted on 0171 792 3709.

Best borrowing rates

	Telephone	% Rate and period	Max adv %	Fee	Incentive	Redemption penalty
HOMESES						
Fixed rates						
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	0.25 for 1 year	70	0.75%	—	1st 5 yrs: 7.24% sum repaid
Skipton BS	01755 700500	3.75 to 30/4/98	75	£295	Free unempl ins + 3 mths B&C ins	1st 5 yrs: 5% of o/s balance
Bristol & West BS	0800 100117	6.99 to 28/2/01	90	£275	—	To 28/2/02: 6 mths interest
Variable rates						
Scarborough BS	0800 590547	1.09 for 1 year	95	—	£150 cash rebate	1st 5 yrs: rebate reclaimed & 6.4% of sum repaid
Derbyshire BS	01332 841000	3.89 for 2 years	75	£125	Free val, fee refund, £250 remortgages	1st 4 yrs: indiv determined
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	4.44 to 1/5/99	95	—	Refund valuation fee	1st 6 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
First time buyers fixed rates						
Bristol & West BS	0800 100117	0.95 to 31/1/97	90	£275	—	To 31/1/01: 8.6 mths int
NatWest Home Loans	0800 400999	4.19 to 31/3/98	95	£145	£50 if b/c's B&C taken	To 31/3/01: 5% of advance
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	5.99 to 1/9/98	95	£295	—	1st 6 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
First time buyers variable rates						
Northern Rock BS	0800 591500	1.19 to 1/5/97	90	—	Refund valuation fee	1st 6 yrs: 5% of sum repaid
Principality BS	01222 344188	3.60 to 1/6/98	90	—	—	To 31/6/01: discount reclaimed
Coventry BS	0800 126125	5.89 to 1/5/00	95	—	£200 cash rebate	To 1/5/01: 6 mths interest
PERSONAL LOANS						
	Telephone	APR			Fixed monthly payments (£2,000 over 3 years)	
Unsecured					With insurance	Without insurance
Direct Line	0141-248 9966	14.90%			£114.41	£102.59
Midland Bank	0800 180180	15.40			£116.54	£103.14
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	16.2			£113.94	£103.33
Securid (second charge)			Max LTV	Advance	Term	
Clydesdale Bank	0800 240024	8.60	75%	£30-£15K	6 mths to 25 years	
Royal B of Scotland	Via branch	9.30	70%	£2.5K-£100K	3 years - retirement	
First Direct	0800 242424	9.80	80%	£3K to neg	Up to 40 years	
CARD CREDIT						
	Telephone	Account	Authorised	Unauthorised		
Woolwich BS	0800 400900	Current	0.76	9.5	2.18	29.5
Alliance & Leicester BS	0500 559595	Alliance	0.76	9.5	2.20	29.8
Abbey National	0500 200500	Current	0.79	9.9	2.18	29.5
STANDARD CREDIT						
	Telephone	Card pm %	Min %	Rate fee	APR	Annual
Standard						
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	0.946	11.80	—
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	MasterCard/Visa	—	1.00	14.60	£12
Royal Bank of Scotland	0800 161616	MasterCard	—	1.14	14.50	—
Co-operative Bank	0345 212212	Visa	£20,000	0.5208M	10.80	£120
Royal B of Scotland	01702 362890	Visa	£20,000	1.05	14.50	£35H
MidWest Bank	0800 200400	Visa	£20,000	1.14	15.90	£35
APR Annualised percentage rate.						
A 1.55% (19.5% APR) for g/s bal over £1K.						
E Available to comprehensive motor insurance policyholders aged over 22 years.						
H Annual fee waived after first year if S&P+ charged to card during previous year.						
All rates subject to change without notice.						
<small>LTV Loan to value D No interest free period. G Annual rate 5% above R Fleming base rate. H Equivalent to base rate. MOREFACTS 01832 500677 29 February 1996</small>						

"Legal & General now has the best-value UK Tracker Fund PEP..."

Money Marketing, 23rd November 1995.

Now we're even better value.

Legal & General can now offer

PEP investors even better value. We've reduced the annual charge on our Index-Tracking PEP to only 0.5% p.a. And there are still no initial charges or withdrawal fees to pay.

Reliable performance that's hard to beat.

When it comes to performance, you'll also find us hard to beat. By tracking the FT-SE-A All-Share Index - the broadest measure of the UK stock market - we aim to provide reliable above average performance.

In fact, most actively managed

MANAGEMENT CHARGES CUT TO JUST 0.5% PA.

NO INITIAL CHARGES

NO WITHDRAWAL FEE

A NEW PEP FREE FOR A YEAR

PEPs fail to match the FT-SE-A All-Share Index with any consistency*.

A free PEP if you invest before April 5th!

If you invest in a Legal & General Index-Tracking PEP before April 5th 1996 - or transfer funds from an existing PEP - we will refund your first year's management charge on it if you also invest with us in a 1996-97 Tax Year PEP. So you could have a new PEP free for a year!

Call now on 0800 11 66 22 or return the coupon today for further information.

CALL 0800 11 66 22 FREE

7 DAYS A WEEK 8AM TO 10PM. PLEASE QUOTE REF TP247

Please send me full written details of the new Legal & General Index-Tracking PEP.

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

POSTCODE _____

TELEPHONE NO. _____

If you already have any PEP investment, please tick here

If you would like your name and address available to unconnected organisations, we will occasionally sell you their products or services offered by ourselves and associate Legal & General Companies. Please tick this box if you would prefer not to receive this information

Legal & General

trust us to deliver

PENSIONS MADE SIMPLE.

*Advice you can Trust
Directly by telephone 24 hours a day*

0345 6789 10

Issued by Scottish Widows' Fund and Life Assurance Society, a mutual company.
Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority.
Information/advice will only be provided on Scottish Widows products.

SCOTTISH WIDOWS

money

A high-risk way to have fun

Invest in nightclubs with an African theme or a satirical magazine — and get tax relief. David Porter explains

Given the state of the housing market, who would dare risk investing in residential property development? Or take a stake in a new satirical magazine due to launch soon? Or buy shares in a company operating North African-themed nightclubs in southern England?

Projects like these are high risk. Not surprisingly, they offer the chance of spectacular returns if they succeed. Inevitably there is a chance they will fail. But in recent weeks investors have been invited to put cash into just such types of venture.

Taxpayers can shelter up to £100,000 in any tax year on investments qualifying for relief under the Enterprise Investment Scheme. Tax relief is at the lowest rate of tax (20 per cent), cutting the initial investment outlay to 80 per cent. Gains are tax-free if the taxpayer retains the investment for five years.

If the investment turns into a dud, losses can be set against a taxpayer's highest rate of tax. Claiming the initial tax relief is easy. The company issues tax form EIS3 to investors, who then send this to their tax office.

Tax coding is altered for PAYE taxpayers, while the self-employed, paying tax by instalments, will enjoy reduced payments. To qualify for the tax relief taxpayers must invest at least £500 in any one EIS approved company, although companies themselves may insist on a higher minimum investment.

While tax reliefs available make high risks more palatable, investors should look carefully at each prospect. Take projected profits with a pinch of salt.

There are several essential questions investors should ask themselves. Does the company and founder have a track record? Are the costs excessive in raising up to £1m allowed per company?

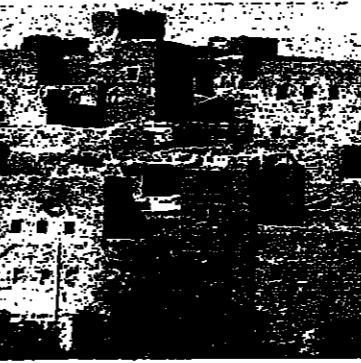
How does the investor cash in on his investment?

Cadogan (0171 738 1961), a publisher of travel guides, is close to raising the £1m needed to buy rival David Campbell Publishers and provide working capital to expand.

DCP was founded in 1990 and made pre-interest and tax profits of £446,000 on sales of £3.7m last year. Cadogan generated profits last year of £70,000 on turnover of £1.1m.

Its EIS fund-raising will cost 7.25 per cent of the amount raised. Cadogan was initially funded through a Business Expansion Scheme, a forerunner to the EIS. Backers have seen more than a 30 per cent return on their initial investment in 1993.

The cost of the Cadogan issue compares favourably to Po Na Na, a group that operates North African-theme nightclubs. Raising £500,000 cost £70,000, although given the popular-



Coming soon to a nightclub near you: the atmosphere of Africa

ity of this issue it could have pulled in the £1m maximum permitted.

Proceeds were used to buy Po Na Na's London club, buy the management contract for Po Na Na in Oxford

and refurbish its Cambridge premises. According to the prospectus, each club attempts to create the "warm and cosy surroundings of North African bazaars and market places."

Those who would like to be mini-media tycoons need look no further than *Insider* (0171 233 5914), a fortnightly satirical magazine launched by gossip journalist Tim Satchell.

He hopes to raise up to £240,000 at a cost of £16,400 for his publishing venture. Break-even equates to 20,000 sales per issue. It will publish on alternate weeks to *Private Eye*, the satirical magazine that sells an average of 192,000 copies.

More run of the mill are the numerous residential property schemes on offer. While investing in EIS companies can provide a lot of fun, never forget they are high risk prospects. At least with the tax advantages not all is lost when they go belly up.

fast car

Want a
Corporate
Bond PEP
with a
personality?



"You can with
the
Woolwich"

No initial charge until 30th April 1996.

Corporate Bond PEP. Doesn't sound very exciting, does it?

Well how does this sound?

A 6.6%* estimated yield. Not a penny to pay in tax. And the opportunity to invest in fixed interest securities issued by companies like BT, Tesco and ICI without the level of risk associated with equity shares.

There's no initial charge if you invest before 30th April 1996 and you can invest either a lump sum (minimum £500) or as little as £25 a month through our Monthly Savings Plan. Use it to build up your capital. Or take an income. The choice is yours.

But here's the big difference. You'll know exactly who this Corporate Bond PEP is coming from - the Woolwich, a name you've known for years.

You can meet one of our friendly, helpful advisers face to face at any of our branches. They'll be happy to fill you in on the details of this or any other Woolwich investment. Alternatively, give us a call on the number below or complete and send the coupon today.

*Estimated yield yield is 32nd January 1996. Estimated based on yield at 30th April 1996. The first income payment where required will be made on 11th October 1996.

*Applicable to all monies received into a plan before 30th April 1996. Lump sum investment minimum £500 and maximum £100,000. Investment in a general Personal Equity Plan (PEP) can be opened.

It's good to be with the
WOOLWICH

BUILDING SOCIETY

CALL 0800 22 22 00 FREE

To: Woolwich Building Society Customer Response Unit,
Fleet or 01794 520000, Kingswood House, Sedgefield, Kent DA14 4RA.
I'd like more details of the Woolwich Corporate Bond PEP.

Name _____
Address _____
Postcode _____ ID 2/96
Telephone _____

THE VALUE OF YOUR INVESTMENT AND INCOME EARNED IS NOT GUARANTEED AND CAN GO DOWN AS WELL AS UP.
PAST PERFORMANCE IS NOT NECESSARILY A GUIDE TO FUTURE PERFORMANCE.

© 1996 Woolwich Building Society. All rights reserved. The Woolwich Building Society represents the Woolwich Marketing Group which is regulated by the Personal Investment Authority for life assurance and unit trusts. The Woolwich Marketing Group is provided with life assurance products by the Standard Life Assurance Group, Prudential Life and Woolwich Building Society and Reputedly under WPA Ltd, Two Twenty Limited, Corporate Headquarters, Wetherby, West Yorkshire LS22 7TG.

Best savings rates

Telephone number	Account	Notice or term	Deposit	Rate %	Interest interval
INSTANT ACCESS					
Portman BS	01202 292444	Instant Access	Instant	2.100	4.80 Year
Skipton BS	01756 700511	High Street	Instant	2.500	5.10 Year
Co-operative Bank	0845 5252000	Pathtinder	Instant	25,000	5.37 Month
Skipton BS	01756 700511	High Street	Instant	£50,000	6.00 Year
INSTANT ACCESS					
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 248248	Direct Premium	Postal	£1,000	4.75 Year
West Bromwich BS	0345 374121	Direct Instant	Postal	£2,000	6.08 Year
West Bromwich BS	0345 374121	Direct Instant	Postal	£25,000	6.25 Year
West Bromwich BS	0345 374121	Direct Instant	Postal	£50,000	6.80 Year
NOTICE ACCOUNTS & BONDS					
Manchester BS	0161 834 9465	45 Day	45 day	£25,000	6.55 Year
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 248248	Direct 90	90 day P	£15,000	6.80 Year
Alliance & Leicester BS	0116 271 7272	Prime 90 Deposit	90 day	£25,000	7.10 Year
Chelsea BS	0800 272505	120 Account	120 day	£5,000	6.50 Year
MONTHLY INTEREST					
West Bromwich BS	0345 374121	Direct Instant	Postal	£2,000	5.84 Month
West Bromwich BS	0345 374121	Direct Instant	Postal	£25,000	6.08 Month
Alliance & Leicester BS	0116 271 7272	Prime 90 Deposit	90 day	£25,000	6.90 Month
Bradford & Bingley BS	0345 248248	Direct 90	90 day P	£30,000	7.00 Month
FIXED RATE BONDS					
West Bromwich BS	0121 680 8024	Guaranteed Growth	31/1/97	£5,000	6.50F - Maturity
Cheshire BS	0800 243278	Fixed Option Bond	31/3/99	£5,000	7.00F Year
First National BS	01232 314050	Windfall Fund	4 yr bond	£1,000	7.00F Year
Sun Banking Corp	01488 744505	Investment Certs	5 yr bond	£1,000	6.90F Year
GUARANTEED INCOME					
Robert Fleming/S&P	0800 829024	Higher Rate Deposit	Instant	£1,000	5.25 3 Months
Kleinwort Benson	01202 502404	HICA	Instant	£2,500	5.50 Month
Alliance & Leicester BS	0116 271 7272	Alliance	Instant	£5,000	5.00 Month
Chelsea BS	0800 717515	Classic Postal	Instant	£25,000	5.25 Year
OFFSHORE					
Northern Rock, Guernsey	01481 714600	Offshore Instant	Instant	£25,000	6.70 Year
Northern Rock, Guernsey	01481 714600	Offshore Instant	Instant	£50,000	6.90 Year
Alliance & Leicestershire (IOM)	01242 663566	Investment Bond	1 yr bond	£25,000	6.95 Year
B'ham Midshires, Guernsey	01481 700680	Fixed Account	31.1.99	£5,000	7.25F Year
PRINCIPAL PROTECTION					
Investment Account			1 month	£20	5.00 Year
				£500	5.50 Year
				£25,000	5.75 Year
Income Bond			3 month	£2,000	6.50 Month
				£25,000	6.75 Month
Capital Bond		Series J	5 year	£100	6.65 F Maturity
First Option Bond			12 month	£1,000	6.25 F Year
Pensioner's G Yield Income Bond		Series 3	5 year	£500	7.00 F Month
43rd Issue				£100	5.35 F Maturity
9th Index linked			5 year	£100	2.50+RPI Maturity
Children's Bond		Issue H	5 year	£25	6.75 F Maturity
P. post only F. fixed rate					
All rates are shown gross and are subject to change without notice.					
MONEYFACTS 01692 500677.					
29 February 1996					

MORE CASH

FOR YOUR ENDOWMENT
SEE MONEY LINE NOW
0181 207 1545

WASHING IN YOUR
ENDOWMENT?

SEASIDE FINANCIAL

Want a
performing
low cost
pension?

Stop the tax man biting into your savings.

Frightening fact:

3 out of 4 of us are
paying way too much
tax on our savings.

Don't be one of them.

Instead, call for the Guide to
Tax-Free Savings with TSB.

From then on, you'll
be in safe hands.

In the past five years, TSB customers have

enjoyed a better return from a tax-free
savings account than the customers
of any other major high street bank.

And just think, with TSB your money
could have grown by 25% in the last

year.* No tax, no catch.

Stop the tax man biting into your savings.

Call TSB PhoneBank and ask for our free Guide
to Tax-Free Savings with TSB.

And remember, you could

make the most of your

tax-free allowance

if you give us a call before

April 5th.

Enticing fact: We'll also

tell you how you could win a £6,000 PEP.

CALL FREE 0500 758 400

A fast car and a dream home. Big mistakes

The third in our series on bad investments. By Corinne Simcock

Quentin Bell, 51, is chairman of the Quentin Bell Organisation; the PR company he started as a one-man band in 1975. Today it employs 60 people, with clients including BT, Norwich Union and Fabergé Fragrances.

In the 1980s, when QBO was growing rapidly, I was looking for alternative investments," he says.

"Rather than leave the rest of my money in the bank, I started investing in things I could either look at or use.

"I have always had a love of quality cars and when Aston Martin announced the launch of its new Virage Volante in 1989 I decided to buy one. I put down a £20,000 deposit and was given a chassis number.

"This was the time when people were playing the futures market with cars. One of the first of these new Aston Martins to come off the production line was immediately sold at auction for £50,000 more than the owner had paid.

"The Inland Revenue expects cars to depreciate, so as long as you're not trading, profit is tax-free. I already had an Aston Martin Volante, and I had seen its value rocket to

£120,000, so I was pretty confident.

"But by 1991 the bottom had fallen out of the car market. The car would have been worth less than I had had to pay for it. I was faced with a dilemma – either I went ahead and paid up £150,000, or I lost my £20,000 deposit.

"Have you ever seen £20,000 in notes? If you've got it sitting on a table in front of you, you tend to think, 'I don't want to lose this'.

"But it was the lesser of two evils, so I just had to my lip.

"You have to remember that this was in the Thatcher years and it was a very buoyant time when supposedly nothing could go wrong. The recession took me by surprise because human beings don't expect change. Once you are on a roll – as we were in the 80s – you expect it to continue.

"Unfortunately, in 1989 I also bought a £60,000 holiday home in southern France. It was a beautiful farmhouse but it needed a lot of money spending on it.

"I bought it on a whim. I thought it would be a good alternative investment. I had also planned to use it as a holiday home. It took me a year to refurbish it, at a cost of

around £115,000. I was flying down every weekend to do what became affectionately known as *Le Plage*.

"It was an hilarious scene: the *plomberies* and the carpenters in their berets and boiler suits would queue up around my table while I wrote out endless cheques.

"Looking back, I simply hadn't thought it through. I broke my golden rule of being focused. Fabulous though the property is, I ended up with neither a holiday home nor an investment.

"When the weather is good, the place is being let. But that only accounts for eight to ten weeks a year. I really loved doing it up. You could argue that it was extremely therapeutic, but it was a very expensive

exercise because I wasted £175,000.

"Had I put it into the Stock Exchange, I would have doubled it by now instead of sitting on a dormant asset.

"The problem with alternative investments is that emotions come into play. You start to look at expensive tiles and sofas, or cars that are wonderful to drive. And that's where everything goes wrong. Generally speaking, it is dangerous to combine investments and emotions.

"Of course life isn't easy. If all investments were going to come right, then everybody would do it. You can't succeed every time. But if you're thinking of a holiday home as an investment, don't because it isn't."



Quentin Bell: 'Workmen would queue up while I wrote endless cheques'

IF YOU WANT 10% NET EVERY YEAR FOR FIVE YEARS RING FREE NOW

SAVE &
PROSPER

The special rate of 10% is tax-free up or down and will depend on the performance of the investment fund to which your Bond is linked. The income payments could be partially derived from your capital. Therefore, there is a risk that you may not get back all of your original investment after 5 years. Tax consequences are not guaranteed and may change at any time. Their value will depend on your individual circumstances. We strongly recommend that you read the brochure and Key Features which we can send to you. Save & Prosper Group Limited is authorised by the Financial Investment Authority and IMRO and only carries on the products and services offered by the Planners and Save & Prosper Marketing Group.

MORE CASH

FOR YOUR ENDOWMENT.
CALL SEC MONEYLINE NOW
0181 207 1666.

SEC will pay you much more money than the surrender value. Don't miss out on that extra cash!
Phone now quoting ref ID22/3/96
Your policy must be at least 8 years old.
FAX: 0181 207 4950
SECURITISED ENDOWMENT CONTRACTS PLC
SEC House, 49 Theobald St, Borehamwood, Herts WD4 4LZ

CASHING IN YOUR ENDOWMENT?

IT'S EASY TO GET MORE
We regularly pay up to 30% MORE* than the surrender value
for with-profits endowment and whole life policies.

*For policies which are at least 8 years old and
have a surrender value greater than £2,000.

Life Company Offered £8,396
Policy Portfolio Price £18,750

Don't lose out –
contact Policy Portfolio Plc today.
Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority

TEL: 0181 343 4567 Lines Open 24 Hours - 7 Days a week
Gadd House, Arcadia Avenue, London N3 2JU

Want a
high performing
low cost
pension?

Our regular contribution with-profits pension plan
appeared in the top ten in all five investment performance
league tables according to a survey carried out by Money
Marketing (with-profits survey, May 1995).

Of course, that's just one set of results - we'd be glad to
show you our record over many years.

But having such excellent performance is what you might
expect from a company that has an international reputation for
keeping costs under control. In October, Money Management
showed the effects of our charges in our with-profits pension to
be the lowest of all the companies surveyed.

In fact, the effect of other companies' charges were, on
average, 10% more, while in the worst case they were 20%
more. (Source: Money Management, October 1995, £200pm
10 year personal pension plans).

So, if you would like to learn about The Equitable's high
performance, low cost personal pension plan by post and by
telephone, return the coupon below or call Aylesbury
01296 384858.

Past performance is no guarantee of future performance.

Information/advice will only be given on Equitable group products
Regulated by the Personal Investment Authority

To: The Equitable Life, FREEPOST, Walton Street, Aylesbury, Buckinghamshire HP21 7BR

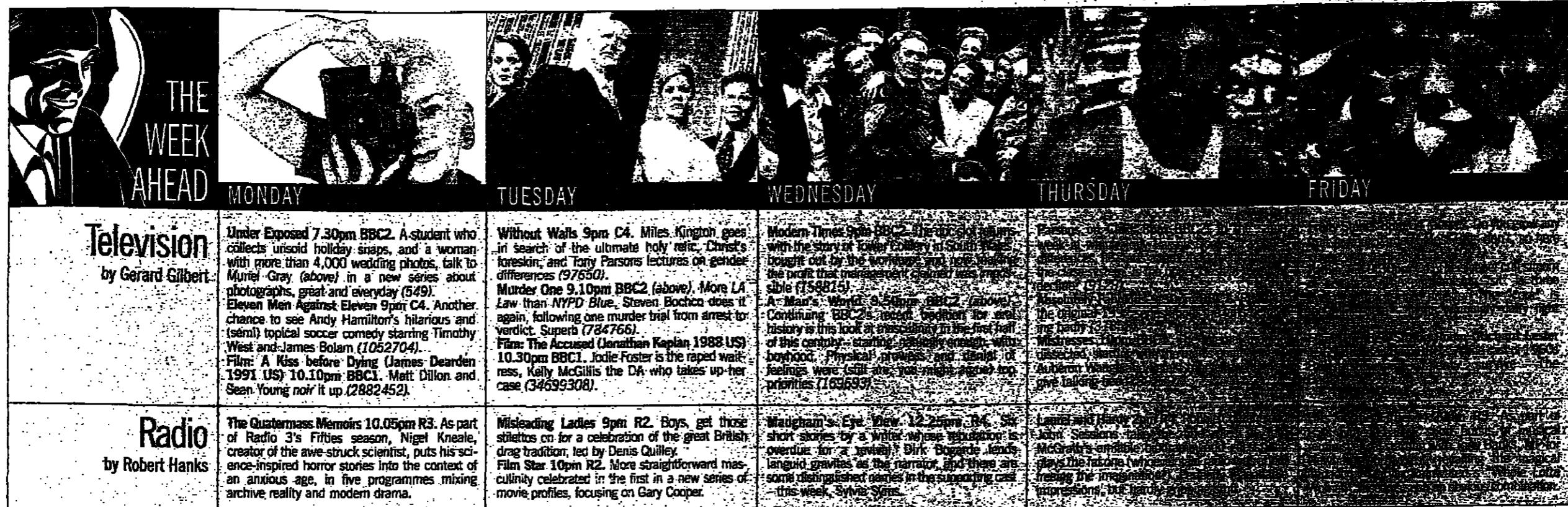
I would welcome details on The Equitable's pension plans I am self employed I am an employee not in a company pension scheme

NAME: Mr/Ms/Ms/Mr
ADDRESS: _____

Tel: (Officer) _____
Tel: (Home) _____
Date of Birth: _____

Postcode: _____

staying in



Television

by Gerard Gilbert

Under Exposed 7.30pm BBC2. A student who collects weird holiday snaps, and a woman with more than 4,000 wedding photos, talk to Muriel Grey (above) in a new series about photographs, great and everyday (5/49).

Eleven Men Against Eleven 8pm C4. Another chance to see Andy Hamilton's hilarious and (semi) topical soccer comedy starring Timothy West and James Bolam (10/27/04).

Film: A Kiss before Dying (James Dearden 1991 US) 10.10pm BBC1. Matt Dillon and Sean Young now it up (2/28/42).

MONDAY

TUESDAY

WEDNESDAY

THURSDAY

FRIDAY

Radio

by Robert Hanks

The Quatermass Memoirs 10.05pm R3. As part of Radio 3's *Fifties* season, Nigel Kneale, creator of the awe-struck scientist, puts his science-inspired horror stories into the context of an anxious age, in five programmes, mixing archive, reality and modern drama.

Misleading Ladies 9pm R2. Boys, get those stilettos for a celebration of the great British drag tradition, led by Denis Quilley.

Film Star 10pm R2. More straightforward masculinity celebrates in the first in a new series of movie profiles, focusing on Gary Cooper.

Madam's Eyes 11pm 12.25am BBC1. Six short stories by a writer before television's invention for a *series*. Dick Bogarde lends languid gravitas as the narrator, and there are some distinguished names in the supporting cast this week. *Sylvia* (Sara

BBC1

7.30 Children's BBC: Jim Henson's Animal Show.

7.55 Playdays.

8.15 Suenos - World Spanish (6432970).

8.30 Breakfast with Frost (74845).

9.30 Season of Change (S) (9530086).

10.15 See Hear! (S) (97996).

10.45 The French Experience (S) (3815777).

11.00 Hidden Empire (R) (S) (2425).

11.30 My Brilliant Career. Gerald Rother (S) (3154).

12.00 Countryfile (S) (49715).

12.30 On the Record. Peter Lilley (51241).

1.30 EastEnders Omnibus (S) (7622785).

2.55 Film: Escape to Victory (John Huston 1981 US).

Professional actors (Michael Caine, Sylvester Stallone, Max Von Sydow) mix it up with professional footballers (including Pele) in a suitably daft. Boys Own adventure about Pele forced to take part in exhibition match in World War II Paris, and plotting escape (3/3629406). *

4.45 Take That - Everything Changes. As the nation absorbs news of their disbandment, Andi Peters charts the rise of the fab five (S) (741609).

5.20 The Clothes Show (S) (1783048).

5.45 News: Weather (765069).

6.05 Regional News (106593).

6.10 Songs of Praise. Hymns from Gateshead Stadium (S) (469390). *

6.45 Antiques Roadshow. From Mansfield (717609). *

7.30 Ballykissangel. 4/6. The Father Clifford's birthday (S) (778244). *

8.20 Birds of a Feather. A repeat edition of the Essex girl sitcom, presumably picked to complement - or soffers, even - Pauline Karsik's radical new direction in *The Sculptress* (R) (S) (385628). *

8.50 News: Weather (325406). *

9.05 The Sculptress. 4/4. Final episode of the thriller starring Pauline Karsik (and a lot of prosthetic make-up) as a woman doing life for murder, who is believed to be innocent by the reporter who's writing a book about the case (S) (745319). *

9.55 Ruby Wax Meets... Burn Reynolds (S) (486777).

10.20 How to Be a Little S* (S) (97628).

10.30 Heart of the Matter. Same-sex marriage contemplated (387390).

11.10 The Couch Trip (Michael Ritchie 1988 US).

Dan Aykroyd plays an escaped patient who impersonates a radio phone-in shrink in this shakey comedy (05/559). *

12.45 The Sky at Night (S) (2623810). *

1.05 Weather (805162) to 1.0am.

REGIONS: Wales: 9.55pm Wales Playhouse. 10.25 Ruby Wax Meets... 10.50 Heart of the Matter. 11.30 Film: The Couch Trip. 1.05 The Sky at Night. 1.25 News. NI: 3.20 Film: Flight of the Navigator.

BBC2

6.15 Open University: Pure Maths: Isomorphism (9181951). 6.40 Maths Methods (6391777).

7.05 World (S) (214235). 7.30 Biology (4717203). 7.55 Maarten Van Heeskerk: Humanism and Painting (1252661). 8.20 Death and Dying: One Fact, Many Faces (4054319).

8.45 Child Development (6512338).

9.10 Children's BBC: Jackanory. 9.25 Phantom 2040.

9.50 Highly Sprung! 10.15 Grange Hill. 10.40 The Ant and Dec Show. 11.05 Short Change.

11.30 Top Score. Introducing children to opera. Jeremy Guscott introduces *La Boheme* (S) (7278245).

11.45 Star Trek (R) (5403593). *

12.30 Police Squad (R) (7467203).

1.00 Singled Out (2446263).

1.25 Holiday Outings. Torquay (37475999).

1.30 Regional Programmes (74999).

2.00 The Vanishing Partridge. The game birds - not Alan (S) (8343781).

2.20 King of Kings (Nicholas Ray 1961)

Cinemascope life of Christ, starring Jeffrey Hunter as Himself, and Subhan McKenna as Mary. Watch out for Rita Torn (Artie in *The Larry Sanders Show*) as Judas (5158115).

4.55 Sports: Yesterday's Five Nations matches (S) (9075715).

5.55 Natural World. The wildlife of Costa Rica's Pacific coast (4226091). *

6.45 The Big Trip. Our three pairs of back-packer reach Malaysia, Hawaii and Senegal (S) (708951). *

7.30 Wheeler on America. Charles Wheeler remembers Watts in 1965, Jesse Jackson's bids for the Presidency, and a meeting with Nation of Islam leader Louis Farrakhan (S) (5782262). *

8.20 The Money Programme. Wonders whatever happened to the predicted boom in organic food sales and production (S) (907178). *

9.00 Cine Anderson is Our Man... the Bronx. See Preview (S) (567628).

9.40 Cricket World Cup. Highlights from Pakistan vs England (819553).

10.40 Film: Honkytonk Man (Clint Eastwood 1983 US).

Eastwood casts himself as an ill-aging and talent-free Depression-era country singer making a last pilgrimage to Nashville with his nephew (actually, Eastwood's son, Kyle) (98597048). *

12.40 Weatherview (7807452).

12.45 Film: The Big Bang (James Toback 1989 US). A basketball player, an Auschwitz survivor, film producer Dan Simpson (recently deceased) and a former mobster talk about life, God, the universe and everything (9698891).

2.00 The Learning Zone. To 7.15am.

2.00 The Learning Zone. To 7.15am.

REGIONS: NI: 1.30pm Welsh Lobby. 4.55 Scrum 5. NI: 1.30pm Country Times.

ITV/London

6.00 GMTV 6.00 The Sunday Review. 6.30 News and Sport. 7.00 The Sunday Programme (30999).

8.00 Disney Club. Dannii Minogue, ex-*Emmerdale* songstress Louise and 2 Point 4 Children actor John Pickard are in the studio (S) (36597976).

8.15 Link. The double discrimination faced by a woman and disabled (323164).

9.30 Sunday Matters. 11.00 Morning Worship from The Drive Methodist Church, Sevenoaks (S) (92512).

12.30 Crossroads (62154).

1.00 News. Weather (48065222). *

1.10 Jonathan Dimbleby. Interviews Labour deputy leader John Prescott (S) (6262661).

2.00 Yesterday's Heroes. Duncan McKenzie and Liam Brady (4048).

2.30 Film: The Jacksons: An American Dream (Lawrence Jones 1992 US). Yes, the story of the Jackson Five, beginning with the family's impoverished roots in the early 1930s, and ending in 1984 (shame). Angela Bassett plays maternities Katherine Jackson (S) (577262).

5.30 The London Programme (38).

6.00 London Tonight (313154).

6.20 News. Weather (579864). *

6.35 Film: A League of Their Own (Penny Marshall 1992). Highly entertaining yarn set during World War II, where a shortage of men means that women's baseball fills the stadiums. Tom Hanks is the (initially anyway) unpleasant manager of a team including Geena Davis, Lori Petty and Madonna (S) (96216951). *

8.50 News. Weather (319845). *

9.10 Band of Gold. The girls are back. See Preview (S) (658319). *

10.10 Cracker. 2/3. Continuing the re-run story with Robert Carlyle as the *Taxi Driver*-style psycho Albie (S) (821999). *

11.10 The New Statesmen. The first-ever series of the Rik Mayall sitcom begins a return (R) (982715).

11.40 Stodge Hammer (554845).

12.10 Film: So Proudly We Hail (Lionel Chetwynd 1989 US). Lively, but botched, thriller about US neo-fascists. Stars Edward Herrmann and David Soul (593549).

1.55 Cue the Music. Georgie Fame in concert (6284568).

3.00 Film: The Dog Who Stopped the War (Andre Melancon 1984 Can). Apparently beguiling comedy about a snowball fight that ends in a neighbourhood war. A Saint Bernard brings peace - hence the title (403033).

4.35 Shift (R) (6861384).

5.30 News (51655). To 6.00am.

Channel 4

6.25 Trans World Sport (R) (7756593).

7.20 Tales 5 (S) (5121048).

7.50 The Magic School Bus (S) (1288086).

8.15 Hong Kong Phooey (S) (2426580).

8.30 Street Dances (S) (6521086).

8.55 Biker Mice from Mars (R) (6521086).

9.20 The Secret World of Alex Mack (S) (2745777).

9.50 Earthworm Jim (S) (5728854). *

10.15 Saved by the Bell (S) (1027777). *

10.40 Wise Up (S) (4317651).

11.15 NBA Raw. Basketball action from the Superstars and the Detroit Pistons (341932).

12.15 Mission Impossible (6328707). *

1.15 Board Stupid (674512).

1.45 Film: Italia, Lazio vs Internazionale (52765574).

4.00 Film: Where Do We Go From Here (Gregory Ratoff 1945 US). A grievous Fred MacMurray beaks in time through US history, for some long-forgotten, contemporary reason. The musical score is by Kurt Weill and Lotte Lenja (S) (98406).

5.30 Hollywoods (R) (S) (80).

6.00 Film: Where Do We Go From Here (Gregory Ratoff 1945 US). Jonathan Silverman finds himself reliving the same day over and over. *Groundhog Day* without the laughs, basically - but imaginatively and compellingly filmed (74576651). *

7.45 Travelog: Italy. Julian Clary visits LA (578241).

8.00 Wiped. The liberal Russian TV channel.

NTV, and the infamous French broadcasting quota, that insists 40 per cent of music played must be French. And we envy them their culture (5154).

8.30 My Generation. The Small Faces appreciated by the likes of Paul Weller and Noel Gallagher (R) (S) (45611).

9.00 Film: Waterland (Stephen Frears 1992 UK).

Graham Swift's poetic Fenland novel reduced by having one eye on the US market - and in this case that one eye too many. Jeremy Irons is the about-to-be-sacked history teacher whose lessons turn into personal memories of his childhood in East Anglia. Sinead Cusack, Ethan Hawke and Lena Headley (who plays an SEM specialist in tonight's *Band of Gold*) co-star (S) (7433383).

10.45 Aileen Wuornos: The Selling of a Serial Killer.

Nick Broomfield goes in search of the world's first female serial killer (R) (17193319). *

12.20 Hunger. Computer animation (3923084).

12.35 Film: Shahed (Ramesh Saigal 1948 India).

Made shortly after independence, this tale looks at the relationship between a mandarin in the imperial civil service and his freedom-fighter son (1871300).

3.20 Four-Motions. Two Hans Richter animations (42574988). To 3.40am.

ITV/Regions

REGIONS

As London except: 2.00pm Countrywide (640223). 2.30 Kidz (572222). 2.55 The Weather (



The big picture

Singin' in the Rain
Sat 9pm BBC2

The clip every TV news bulletin showed when Gene Kelly died last month was the title song from *Singin' in the Rain*. It bears repetition, too, being widely credited as the seminal routine in film musicals. Kelly was limited to 'Mr Nice Guy' roles, but what does that matter when he pulled them off with such aplomb? His dancing, too, was marked by a cheerful accessibility. As he himself put it: 'Fred Astaire represents the aristocracy when he dances. I represent the proletariat.'

Television preview

RECOMMENDED VIEWING THIS WEEKEND
by Gerard Gilbert

Hidden Kingdoms Sat 8pm CA
Stars in Their Eyes Sat 8.05pm ITV
Belle Epoque Sat 10.40pm BBC2
Wheeler on America Sun 7.30pm BBC2
Clive Anderson Is Our Man Sun 8pm BBC2

Clive James without the leer. But *Our Man* seems lost for a snappy repartee when confronted with track babies, drug dealers and real-life desperation. To see how the Bronx became the Bronx, catch *Wheeler on America* (Sun BBC2), this week chronicling black America's trek to the Promised Land and back again.

The girls are back in *Band of Gold* (Sun ITV), struggling to stay in cleaning contracts and out of prostitution, and already this looks like a series 100 far.

Band of Gold is followed by the continued rerun of *Cracker*, a strong fare for an ITV Sunday evening.

Mind you, there's no escaping to BBC1, where *The Script* reaches a conclusion.

And finally there's Wolfgang Weber. While most amateur dabbers are content to pose a tame nibble of fruit, Weber lies down with lions and hungry grizzlies and whips out his sketch pad. He even sketches underwater, which is a new one to me. It's just a pity that the script of *Hidden Kingdoms* (Sat 8pm) is as lumbering as an albatross taking off. But you'll have to watch Dieter Plage's film (this last) to see just how lumbering that is.



The big match

Scotland vs England
Sat 3pm BBC1

Scotland have pulled off their familiar trick of confounding all the pundits who wrote them off as no-hopers before the Five Nations began. Only England at Murrayfield now stand between them and a stunning Grand Slam. Virtually every newspaper this week has run an article on Dean Richards (above) - the England No 8. Does his recall signify a return to forward-dominated 10-man rugby, or will they continue trying to put their theories into practice?

Saturday television and radio

BBC1

7.25 News; Weather (59720431).
7.30 Children's BBC: *Imogoud*. 7.45 The Artbox Bunch. 8.00 *Imogoud*. 8.10 *The Flintstones*. 8.35 *The Addams Family*. 9.00 *Live and Kickin'*. 1. Guests include Jon Bon Jovi and the Lightning Seeds.
12.12 Weather (25690431).
12.15 Grandstand. 1.20 Football Focus. 12.55 Racing from Newbury: 1.00 The Berkshire Handicap Steeplechase. 1.10 News. 1.15 Rugby Union: Five Nations preview. 1.25 Racing from Newbury. 1.30 The North Sydmonden Handicap Steeplechase. 1.40 Skiing: Highlights of today's men's downhill in the World Cup in Japan. 1.55 Racing from Newbury. 2.00 The Ladbroke Handicap Hurdle. 2.10 Rugby Union: Live coverage of Scotland vs England (kick off at 5pm). See *The big match*. 4.40 Final Score. 5.00 Rugby Union: Extended highlights of Ireland vs Wales (S) (65362666). 5.30 News: Weather (150289).
5.40 Local News, Weather (175753).
5.45 Big Break. Return of the snooker quiz show. Jimmy White, Paul Davids and Dean Reynolds are the waistcoats with the sticks (S) (236550).
6.15 The New Adventures of Superman. A mad computer genius abducts and hypnotises Lois (S) (2425203).
7.00 *Noel's House Party* (S) (99473).
7.05 The National Lottery Live (S) (1612685).
8.05 Morecambe and Wise. Shirley Bassey sings 'Smoke Gets in Your Eyes', and Keith Michell helps Eric and Ern stage a play about the Foreign Legion. Yes, we're talking the 1970s (S) (474965).
8.35 News and Sport: Weather (Followed by National Lottery Update) (654444).
9.00 The Sculptress 3/4. Continuing the Pauline Quirk psychological thriller, Rosalind (Caroline Goodall) tries to shock Olive (Quirk) into revealing the truth. Concludes tomorrow (S) (876289).
9.50 The Nose at Ten - Best of Comic Relief. Jo Brand introduces excerpts from 10 years of Comic Relief, including Reeves and Mortimer, Rory Bremner, Ruby Wax, Penelope Keith, Emma Thompson, Fry and Laure, Hale and Pace, Harry Enfield, and Alan Partridge's legendary outside broadcast from Norwich (S) (531227).
10.20 Match of the Day. Tottenham Hotspur vs Southampton and all the other Premiership goals (S) (819275).
11.25 *Sherlock Holmes and the Crucifer of Blood* (Fraser Heston 1991 US). Charlton Heston as *Sherlock Holmes*: Decent British thesping (Richard Johnson, Edward Fox, Simon Callow) leaves this piece of miscasting in a solid adaptation of *The Sign of Four* (S) (339550).
1.05 Weather (8175390). To 1.10am.
REGIONS: Wales: 3.00pm Rugby Union: Ireland vs Wales. 5.00 Rugby Union: Scotland vs England. 5.40 Wales Today. M: 2.40pm Rugby Union: Ireland vs Scotland. 5.00 Rugby Union: Scotland vs England.

BBC2

6.00 Open University: Computing (9126024). 6.25 Maths (9105531). 6.50 Stones for Building (6320289). 7.15 Humanity and the Scaffolding (5171043). 7.45 Earthquakes: Seismology at Work (4779043). 8.05 Languages and Literature (5931598). 8.30 Lifetimes, Work and the Family (7991598). 9.20 From Child to Pupil (7295285). 9.45 The Chemistry of Almost Everything (4956556). 10.10 From a Different Shore: An American Identity (1365598). 11.00 Networks: The Location Problem (8150753). 11.25 Copernicus and His World (6529376). 11.50 Open Mind: Beautiful Dreamers (8194869).
12.15 Michael Barry's Choice Cuts. Recipes from 10 years of Food and Drink (R) (9693043).
12.25 Hotshots. Let's hear it for the Kingfisher (261692).
12.35 *The Dark Mirror* (Robert Stodmak 1946 US). Forget the simplistic Hollywood Freudianism as psychologist Lew Isaacs is called in by the police to ascertain which of two sisters (both played by Olivia de Havilland) is a murderer. Enjoy instead a funky piece of Hollywood Expressionism, all tight camera angles and deep, dark shadow (7721173).
2.00 *Film Custer of the West* (Robert Stodmak 1968 US). Robert Shaw makes his last stand in glorious Cinema, but a less than glorious Yankee accent. Mary Ure mops his brow (7876966).
4.15 *Best of Esther*. Anorexia gets 'em going (R) (S) (236937).
4.45 The Oprah Winfrey Show. With Michael Bolton and a singing sensation (Shirley) (S) (4720014). *
5.25 *TOTF 2* (S) (3303483).
6.10 2 Dance Billboards. The artist formerly known as Prince provides the music for a full-length rock ballet, performed by the Joffrey Ballet Company of New York. Songs include 'Trust', 'Purple Rain' and 'Baby, I'm a Star' (S) (421531).
7.05 News and Sport: Weather (906376). *
7.20 Correspondent. Reportage on Hindu nationalist group Shiv Sena, and the decline in the rockhopper penguin population of the Falklands (595753). *
8.05 Bookmark. Dame Muriel Spark makes a rare appearance. (Followed by *Family Album*) (S) (157550). *
9.00 *Singin' in the Rain* (Gene Kelly and Stanley Donen 1952 US). See *The big picture* (1421604).
10.40 Belle Epoque. See preview (Followed by *Family Album*) (207005).
12.10 *Film Monsieur Hiré* (Patrice Leconte 1989 Fr) The eyes of Michel Blanc are constantly fixed on the young woman who lives opposite, Sandrine Bonnaire, as Leconte turns Simonon's psycho-chiller into a subtle study of the obsessive voyeur. A neat, very Gallic chamber piece washed down with a Brahms-inspired Michael Nyman score (8859883). To 1.30am.

ITV/London

6.00 GMTV 6.00 News; Weather. 6.10 Eat Your Words. 6.40 Tom and Jerry Kids. 6.45 Barney and Friends. 7.15 Saturday Disney. With Byker Grove actress Claire Graham. 8.25 Mighty Morphin Power Rangers (9096424).
9.25 *Telégatine/Gégévasion*. With actress Tracy Shaw, hairdresser Maxine in Coronation Street, and behind the scenes on *Star Trek* (2497024).
10.25 It's Not Just Saturday. Boy group Boyzone guest, and there's a look at the tennis sport of snowboarding (S) (9262521).
11.30 The Chart Show (R) (S) (253761).
12.30 Whiz Kids. 24-year-old designer Hussein Chalayan (R) (S) (451145).
1.00 News, Weather (5461955). *
1.05 Local News, Weather (54618227). *
1.10 Champions League Special. Preview of next week's European Cup soccer (R) (S) (60004604). *
1.40 Movies, Games and Videos (42871547).
2.00 *Film Carry Spying* (Gerald Thomas 1964 UK). Kenneth Williams, Barbara Windsor (in her first *Carry On*), Bernard Cribbins, Jim Dale and Charles Hawtrey send up the Bond movies and that decade's obsession with espionage (S) (340434).
3.45 *Airwolf* (R) (745262).
4.45 News; Sport: Weather (4997444). *
5.05 Local News, Sport (1189937). *
5.20 *Carton* (3104260).
5.35 *Catchphrase* (201717).
6.05 Barrymore. Mary Chippendale and Teddy the chimpanzee are guests. You have been warned (S) (356753). *
7.05 *Blind Date*. Emma and Carmelo return from Cyprus (including *Lottery Result*) (S) (629531). *
8.05 Stars in Their Eyes. People pretend to be Meat Loaf, Donovan, Gloria Estefan and Marvin Gaye - bless 'em. See preview (S) (601956). *
8.50 News; National Lottery Update; Weather (473043). *
9.05 An Audience with Freddie Starr. The man who allegedly ate his hamster takes questions from a celeb-packed audience, including Liz Dawn, Robson Green, Jack Dee, Lee Evans, Darren Day and Dale Winton. Spot the up-and-coming light-entertainment establishment? (S) (788289). *
10.05 *Film* Too Hot to Handle (Lerry Reeves 1991 US). Too bad to watch, is closer to the truth, as Alec Baldwin, and Kim Basinger refuse to shine in a Neil Simon-scripted romantic comedy (S) (80885376).
12.15 Funny Business. With Charlie Chuck and Edwin Collins (81454).
12.45 *Pyama Party* (S) (8690864).
2.10 *Film* Night Moves (Arthur Penn 1975 US). Fine, underated thriller in which Gene Hackman's PI goes in search of runaway nymphlet Melanie Griffith and learns some home truths along the way (319222).
4.05 *God's Gift* (R) (6096154).
5.00 *Night Shift* (R) (8593241).
5.05 *Coach* (S) (4525048). To 5.30am.

Channel 4

6.10 Sesame Street (R) (8803753).
7.05 *Ulysses 31* (R) (5142531).
7.30 *Super Mario Brothers* (8721289).
7.45 First Edition (R) (719444).
8.00 *Trans World Sport* (16163).
9.00 *The Morning Line* (S) (79504).
10.00 Chinese Football. Sichuan's rebellion battle against Qingdao (56579).
10.30 NBA. Highlights of the San Antonio Spurs at Indiana Pacers (R) (81314).
11.00 *Carica Football Italia* (34940).
12.00 The Late Late Show. Features Sean Bean and Boyzone (S) (72666).
12.30 *The Great Maratha* (7426956).
12.55 *Film* The Ghost and Mrs Muir (Joseph L. Mankiewicz 1947 US). Gentle charrmer starring Rex Harrison as the ghost of a sea-dog captain who haunts (and wins) the widowed Gert Muir. George Sanders and Edna Best support (55605550). *
2.50 Channel 4 Racing from Doncaster. The 3.00 Yester Publications *H'cap Horse* (3m 110yds); 3.35 Mitsubishi Shogun Trophy (1'cap Chase); 4.05 Perpetual Great Yorkshire Chase (H'cap Chase) (3m 110yds) (S) (24635547).
5.05 *Brookside* Omnibus. (S) (4476314).
6.30 *Right to Reply*. A police officer attacks the portrayal of the police in *Our Friends in the North* (S) (85). *
7.00 *A Week in Politics* (Includes News Summary). Chris Smith on Labour thinking on the welfare state. Plus, three new MPs and their marginal constituency constituents (S) (82227).
8.00 *Hidden Kingdoms*. Risk-taking wildlife artist Wolfgang Weber captured with award-winning cameraman Dieter Plage. See preview (S) (45447). *
9.00 *Wiederkreis Pet* (7111). *
10.00 *The World of Lee Evans*. Repeat of Evans's series of silent comedy dramas. An acquired taste, to say the least (R) (S) (104395). *
10.35 *Europtrash* (R) (S) (716314).
11.10 *The White Room*. The impressive live music show - just occasionally on the self-important side (witness last week's double act from Tricky and Terry Hall) ends its run with Massive Attack, Everything But the Girl, Gary Numan, Sting, David Bowie and Lou Reed (S) (222550).
12.10 *The Girl Show*. Last night's tedium featuring 'tough women' - a welterweight boxing champ and a group of kung-fu nuns from New York (R) (S) (4895125).
1.00 *The Legend of the 4 Kings*. Manga (S) (5622086).
1.55 *Twilight Zone*. The Devil sits in on a poker game in an episode directed by Wes Craven (S) (48214680).
2.20 *Beast Specials*. Featuring Pulp and The Sultans of Ping (R) (S) (2809715).
3.20 *Parks Dept* (Alexei Sayle) is committed to an asylum. John Bird guests (R) (S) (97080338). To 3.45am.

ITV/Regions

AS London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (45145). 1.40 *Film Ambush* at Tomahawk Gap (7022181). 3.05 *Robot* (28597289). 5.20 *Warner Carton* (3104262). 12.15 *Pyama Party* (2759154). 1.40 *Sam Pyama Party* (2759170). 2.10 *Trans World Sport* (4525203). 3.00am *Film* *The Last Dragon* (233116). 4.45 *Music Box Profiles* (32359680). 5.00-5.30am *Wanted Dead or Alive* (62425).
TUE TEES (NORTH)

As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (45145). 1.40 *Bugs Bunny Special* (42871647). 2.10 *Film* *In Search of a Golden Girl* (324043). 3.10 *Sam Pyama Party* (234024). 4.45 *Music Box Profiles* (32359680). 5.00-5.30am *Wanted Dead or Alive* (62425).
CINEMA

As London except 12.30pm Heartland (5145). 2.10 *Coronation Time* (2019531). 2.25 *Armed* (46053769). 3.20 *Trans World in Paradise* (2334043). 4.15 *The Madas Touch* (2234631). 5.10 *Central Match - Goals Extra* (3124043). 5.30am *Jobhouse* (5367222). 5.20-5.30am *Asian Eye* (2569611).
WED

As London except 12.30pm *The Munsters Today* (45145). 1.40 *Film* *The Dot Kit* (63443). 2.10 *Coronation Time* (2019531). 2.25 *Armed* (46053769). 3.20 *Trans World in Paradise* (2334043). 4.15 *The Madas Touch* (2234631). 5.10 *Central Match - Goals Extra* (3124043). 5.30am *Jobhouse* (5367222).
MERRION

As London except 12.30pm Movies, Games and Videos (45145). 1.40 *A World of Wonder* (16761647). 2.10 *Alnold* (7391482). 3.05 *Robot* (28597289).
12.15 *Sam Pyama Party* (2759154). 1.40am *Funny Business* (4519570). 2.10am *American Gladiators* (4659203). 3.00am *Film* *The Last Dragon* (233116). 4.45 *Music Box Profiles* (32359680). 5.00-5.30am *Wanted Dead or Alive* (62425).
SIC

As C4 except 11.00am *The Persuader* (848-10). 12.30pm *Board Stupid* (7426959). 12.55 *Films* 20,000 Years in Sing Sing (3303531). 2.20 *Joey Rhynhardt* (5681204). 3.15 *Halopax* (651700). 2.58 *Knight Rider* (1652173). 3.15 *Alnold* (4622416). 12.15 *Sam Pyama Party* (2759154). 1.40am *Funny Business* (4519570). 2.10am *American Gladiators* (4659203). 3.00am *Film* *The Last Dragon* (233116). 4.45 *Music Box Profiles* (32359680). 5.00-5.30am *Wanted Dead or Alive* (62425).
WEST

As C4 except 11.00am *The Persuader* (848-10). 12.30pm *Board Stupid* (7426959). 12.55 *Films* 20,000 Years in Sing Sing (3303531). 2.20 *Joey Rhynhardt* (5681204). 3.15 *Halopax* (651700). 2.58 *Knight Rider* (1652173). 3.15 *Alnold* (4622416). 12.15 *Sam Pyama Party* (2759154). 1.40am *Funny Business* (4519570). 2.10am *American Gladiators* (4659203). 3.00am *Film* *The Last Dragon* (233116). 4.45 *Music Box Profiles* (32359680). 5.00-5.30am *Wanted Dead or Alive* (62425).
PALMA from £155

PRAGUE from £145

It's your passport out of here.

Radio

Radio 1
07.59 *8840*:
7.00am Kevin Greening 10.00
Dave Pearce 12.30 Danny Baker
2.30 Jo Whiley 5.00 John Peel
7.00 Lovegrove Dance Party
with Danny Rampling 9.00 Radio 1
1. Rap Show 12.00 Essential Mix:
Horns B 2.00 Annie Nightingale's
Chill Out Zone 4.00-7.00am

Radio

PROFILE: Binyamin Netanyahu

Israel's opposition leader has seen his political prospects improve this week, reports Patrick Cockburn

Binyamin Netanyahu, universally known as Bibi, is on his best behaviour. The suicide bombs that exploded in Jerusalem and Ashkelon last Sunday, killing 23 Israelis, have certainly saved Israel's opposition leader from humiliating defeat in the forthcoming elections and could make him Prime Minister in three months' time. In the days since the bombings, he has oozed moderation, urging restraint and promising not to exploit the tragedy for his own Likud party's advantage.

He does not have to. Shimon Peres, the Labour Prime Minister, is already badly wounded by the bombings. "Another three more attacks like this and Peres loses the elections," says one of the government's advisers.

"There is no strategy that can counter exploding buses. Bibi appeals to Israelis in the way Pat Buchanan appeals to Americans. When the gut speaks, Bibi can smile."

Newt Gingrich, the speaker of the House, might be a better parallel. He and Mr Netanyahu share the same soundbite fluency. Both are sure in attack than defence and have been despised and underestimated by their numerous enemies as successful opportunists short on real policies. Mr Netanyahu has none of Buchanan's social populism but shares his ability to tap into the voters' anxieties. And there is no doubt what makes the Israeli voter anxious at the moment: he fears that the Oslo accords, agreement with the Palestinians, have made his life more dangerous rather than safer. Across Israel last week, parents were walking or driving their children to school rather than allowing them to take a bus. Suddenly, Mr Netanyahu's claim that he can deliver "peace with security" looked very attractive. He says it is possible to beat suicide bombers - though he does not disclose how - and, if elected, he would go on talking to the Palestinians, though he will refuse to meet Yasser Arafat.

These policies may be contradictory, but polls show that so are the views of the Israeli voter. But Mr Netanyahu has to be very cautious. He only just survived the moment last November when Leah Rabin nearly refused to shake his hand at her assassinated husband's funeral. "It's too late," she said to him, as she finally extended her arm. She meant that it was too late for him to express regrets for his part in creating a climate of violence in the months before Mr Rabin was murdered. Mr Netanyahu tried to brush off her remarks by saying she was distraught, but he was politically badly damaged.

His new caution was visible last week. A year ago, Mr Netanyahu would probably have visited the scorched wreckage of Bus 18, in which 23 Israelis died, and made some outspoken criticisms of the government. Instead, he stayed away and his comments were mild, saying suicide bombers did not distinguish between Likud and Labour voters. The election is not until 29 May and, as the emotional reaction to the bombs dies away, he does not want to be charged once again with irresponsibility. Panicked by his plunge in the polls, Labour is gearing up for an attack on Mr Netanyahu's character.

It has plenty of ammunition, though it has not proved very effective in the past. Labour



All things in moderation: since the bombings, Binyamin Netanyahu has urged restraint

Photograph: AP

Can Bibi beat the suicide bombers?

will contrast Mr Netanyahu's youth - he is only 46 - and inexperience with that of Shimon Peres, 72, who was running the Israeli Defence Ministry when Mr Netanyahu was a baby. If elected, he will be the first Israeli leader not to have taken part in the 1948 war of independence. The son of a distinguished historian, who specialises in Jewish history in Spain in the Middle Ages, he is very much the creature of the Israel that developed after the 1967 war.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

Throughout this period, Mr Netanyahu was catching up with Mr Rabin in the polls. The suicide bomb attacks on targets in the heart of Israel in 1994 and 1995 made all Israelis feel vulnerable. Mr Netanyahu decided to bet heavily on the settlers of the West Bank and the extreme right, both totally opposed to the Oslo peace deal. He and his entourage mocked warnings that things might get out of hand, leaving him deeply vulnerable when Yigal Amir assassinated Mr Rabin on 4 November.

The suicide bombings in Jerusalem and Ashkelon mean that Mr Netanyahu can return to the policy that served him well for two years. Its expression is likely to be more moderate. He now leaves it unclear if he opposes or accepts the Oslo accords. He says he "would not send back the tanks" into autonomous Palestinian areas, but implies that the government should cancel its withdrawal from Hebron. It may be difficult to maintain this ambiguity for three months, and Israeli voters could come to feel that if Mr Netanyahu wins, the likelihood is more suicide bombs rather than less.

The new Environmental

Agencies have a very important role in making up for the previous neglect of soils. Their new functions in relation to contaminated land should be brought into effect as soon as possible. The other legislation applying to them should be reviewed within three years to ensure that they seek the best practicable environmental option in all their activities.

The pressure on UK soils comes not only from agriculture, but extraction of peat and other minerals, from con-

He appeals in the way Pat Buchanan appeals to Americans. When the gut speaks, Bibi can smile'

Binyamin Netanyahu spent five years as a commander, but his family's reputation for military prowess stems from his brother, Jonathan, who died leading the Israeli raid to free prisoners on a hijacked plane at Entebbe in 1976. Bibi's political career took off in the Eighties, the Likud's years of success. His rise into the Israeli political elite took place in the US, where he took a degree in architecture and business administration and was then number two at the Israeli embassy in Washington.

In 1984, he became Israeli ambassador to the UN, a role in which he was in constant demand on US television. He speaks perfect English, in a rich, beguiling voice that is particularly

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

From the beginning of his political career, Mr Netanyahu has proved accident-prone but also apparently unsinkable. He appeared on

effective on television. Good-looking, with intense, darting eyes, he is also an effective platform performer, though he gives the impression that he has seldom had to face hard questioning. He is the author of several books, though they have a glib, propagandist quality and have done little for his reputation.

<p

When you start
a small business,
the last thing
you need is a bank
that treats
you like one.

Some banks think they need to hold your hand when you're a small business. We don't. We just give you sound, professional financial guidance. New businesses benefit from the same high quality service that huge corporations enjoy. Plus free Business Information Fact Sheets and free Business Opportunity Profiles, as well as the widest range of Government and E.U. loans. At Barclays don't expect special treatment because you've just started up. Expect it all the time.



COMMENT

Despite the undoubted benefits from direct investment, it still leaves many people feeling uneasy. Early worries about Britain becoming the home of screwdriver plants have not been wholly dispelled.

The rush of inward investment continues apace. The latest project is a £230m expansion in silicon chip production, creating 770 jobs – courtesy of the Hong Kong electronics company QPL. Proof positive, ministers proclaim, that their electioneering slogan of Britain as the enterprise centre of Europe adds up to jobs on the ground.

Cynics will point rather to the level of public funds going into the plant via the Welsh Development Agency. More generally, the question raised by this and other projects is whether it is really such a compliment to receive so much inward investment.

The scale of the flow into the UK is certainly substantial. In the first three quarters of 1995, no less than £11bn of direct investment took place – more than 2 per cent of GDP. More important, the inflow was equivalent to almost 15 per cent of total investment in the economy – this at a time when growth in capital spending has been extremely disappointing.

Much of the inflow has in practice gone on the purchase of financial assets through mergers and takeovers, rather than new investment on the ground. But clearly foreign firms are now playing a highly significant role in renewing the country's capital stock.

Nowhere is this more so than in manufacturing, for so long the Achilles' heel of the British economy. Foreign firms now account for almost a third of total industrial investment. They equip each of their workers with double the amount of plant and equipment

provided by UK-owned firms. It comes as no surprise, then, that foreign-owned firms produce 40 per cent more per worker than their UK counterparts.

However, despite the undoubted benefits from direct investment, it still leaves many people feeling uneasy. Early worries about Britain becoming the home of screwdriver plants have not been wholly dispelled. It is true that foreign investors conduct a fair amount of research in Britain. Their share of manufacturing research and development was 19 per cent in 1989, hardly less than their 21 per cent share of turnover. However, this is less encouraging than it seems, because the big multinationals who predominate in foreign investment spend disproportionately on R&D. Certainly the evidence of "Silicon Glen" – the concentration of electronics manufacturing in Scotland – is that the local economy remains strongest in assembly work rather than higher value areas.

Furthermore, while manufacturing has been assisted by foreign investment, the long slide in its share of GDP has not been reversed. Ten years ago, it accounted for just over a quarter of national output; now it accounts for little over a fifth. No doubt the position would have been considerably worse without the big investments made by foreign companies. Yet the inward flow testifies as much to the underlying weakness of manufacturing, with foreign investors retreating huge swathes of industry – like colour television production – abandoned by second-rate home producers.

So we get industrial regeneration of a kind. But it comes on the terms of the multinationals who have selected Britain as a base. There is a price to be paid and this is not just overt or covert forms of industrial support. More importantly, the freedom of policymakers to tax business is restricted. The interest of foreign investors in strategic questions such as Britain's place in Europe also has to be considered. Multinationals have invested in the UK as a springboard for a European market and they don't want to see that threatened. For all the Tory Euro-sceptic rhetoric, the effect is to constrain ministerial freedom of manoeuvre. This may be no bad thing. In the end, however, the price we pay for inward investment is loss of control.

European minefield for Lloyds Chemists bids

For those interested in the arcane world of EU competition policy, the Lloyds Chemists takeover saga is proving quite a treasure. As this column warned it might be, the UniChem bid for Lloyds, one of Britain's biggest pharmacy chains, was yesterday referred to the Monopolies and Mergers Commission. At the same time the MMC asked that the rival bid by Gehe should be brought back to Britain from Brussels for consideration by the MMC alongside UniChem. Gehe is a German company. The cross-

border nature of its bid gives Brussels jurisdiction. Clearly, it would be ridiculous for UniChem to be referred to the MMC and not Gehe, for as far as the UK is concerned, the two companies are mirror images of each other. Their bids raise exactly the same competition issues.

However, claiming Gehe back from Brussels is more than just a formality. What has to happen is that a particular domestic competition problem – say undue concentration of market power in Yorkshire – has to be demonstrated. The MMC then has to confine its deliberations to that specific concern. What the Office of Fair Trading is doing with UniChem and wants to do with Gehe is have a wide-ranging inquiry dealing with issues of "vertical integration" and anything else that takes the MMC's fancy. It hasn't actually raised a "specific" concern. The application form is as a consequence incorrectly filled in.

A field day for Gehe's lawyers then. The European Commission would like to say to say yes to the British competition authorities, but technically it may be barred from doing so. Don't forget the politics of this, however. Brussels is at present trying to extend its remit for examining cross-border mergers by reducing the qualifying size. In this it is facing fierce resistance from both Britain and Germany. But if the EC agreed to hand back more cases to domestic competition authorities, Britain might just be persuaded to drop its opposition. Here's another good reason, therefore, why Brussels might in this case be persuaded to bend the rules.

Competition law may be an arcane world, but most people are capable of understanding the concept of one law for UniChem, a British company, and an altogether different and less onerous one for Gehe, a German company. It is plainly not right.

Labour attack on rail link is nonsense

It is not often, these days, that it is possible to write in support of a government initiative, but the ground on which Labour has chosen to attack the high speed rail link is so much nonsense. Certainly the delays and shifting of position which have characterised this project have been farcical. But to portray the whole thing as a gigantic give-away to the private sector, as Clive Short, Labour's transport spokeswoman, does, is to do nothing. Nobody would have even considered building this link without a very considerable direct Government grant. While some important assets – quite a lot of land, the Waterloo International terminal, St Pancras Station and a one-third interest in Eurostar – have been thrown in for good measure, they only have a value if it is possible to make money out of them. So far the state has failed, so why not give the private sector a go?

Lord Young to settle for £2.4m

MARY FAGAN
Industrial Correspondent

Lord Young of Graffham is poised to accept a £2.4m compensation package following his ousting in November as chairman of Cable & Wireless after a boardroom row with James Ross, who was also forced to leave the company. The expected agreement comes after months of bitter negotiation between the company and its former head, who is thought to have been demanding about £4m.

The deal for Lord Young includes the right to exercise share options which at yesterday's price would make him a profit of almost £2m. He is also likely to receive a further £400,000 in salary, bonuses and other benefits.

In structure the package is similar to that agreed with Mr Ross, who agreed a £1.5m deal last week. The discussions with Lord Young are thought to have proved more delicate as he had no formal service contract with the company.

The size of the settlements have raised eyebrows in the City as the row between the two men became acrimonious and public, damaging the image of the group.

At the time, analysts said that the situation increased the vulnerability of C&W, which for months had been at the centre of takeover speculation. One commentator said that the reward seemed rather high for failing to get on with colleagues.

Shares in C&W closed at £4.52 yesterday, an increase on the opening price of 75p.

A spokesman for the group declined to comment on any deal with the former chairman. "Our position is that we have made an offer an are awaiting a response."

However, it is thought that talks are drawing to a successful close, and that Lord Young may use the money to establish a company advising business on investment overseas.

The debacle has left C&W without a chief executive.

Duncan Lewis, former chief executive of its Mercury Communications subsidiary was in the running but is thought not to be on the shortlist.

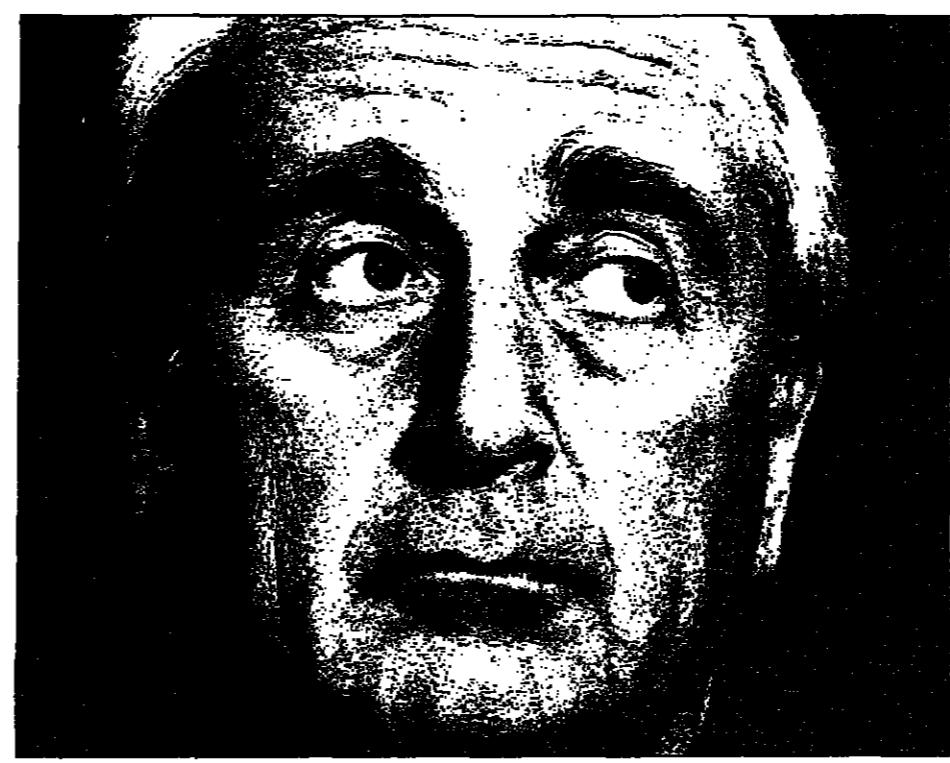
Rod Olsen, the finance director who has been appointed acting chief executive, also ruled himself out.

The view is that the group is poised to appoint an foreigner to the post, possibly from a large US cable or telecommunications company. C&W recently took the step of changing its articles to allow a non-British to take the job.

Some City analysts still believe that the group is ripe for break-up. There has been speculation that BT may attempt a deal with AT&T of the US to acquire C&W and divide the spoils.

BT would not be allowed to have Mercury but would be interested in the substantial assets in the Far East and the Pacific region. AT&T, which is attempting to break into the UK telecommunications market, could use Mercury to leapfrog into a pole position.

Delicate discussions: Lord Young had no formal service contract with Cable & Wireless



Fidelity selling BET

RUSSELL HOTTON

arbitrageurs piled into BET in the hope that Rentokil will increase its offer.

One analyst said that the move by the two investment firms suggested some doubts that Rentokil would increase its offer significantly.

There seems to be a lot of hedging of bets here. BET had been a dog and it makes sense to cash in a few shares, the analyst said.

The firm, the second largest shareholder in BET before the bid was announced last month, has reduced its stake from 5.17 per cent to about 3.3 per cent.

Mercury Asset Management, which held 1.7 per cent at the start of the bid battle, is also thought to have been a steady seller.

Share traders have said there has been heavy demand from the United States as

COMPANY RESULTS				
	Turnover £	Pre-tax £	EPS	Dividend
Formcast (I)	2.53m (2.3m)	0.51m (0.56m)	49.14 (56)	-1
Ge-Alitalia Group (I)	87.6m (48.7m)	6.69m (4.1m)	12.69p (12.03p)	1.85p (1.6p)
Henry's Group (F)	452m (340m)	25.3m (15.1m)	34.10 (25.89)	12p (8.5p)
Memory Corp (F)	0.45m (-)	-1.95m (-1.05m)	3.316 (-2.116)	nd (-)
Sparc Consulting (F)	7.38m (6.02m)	0.90m (1.21m)	4.43p (6.29p)	-4p (3.6p)
Specialeyes (F)	21.8m (20.4m)	7.84m (-0.28m)	33.45p (-5.05p)	0.75p
UK Estates (I)	- (-)	0.11m (0.53m)	0.11p (0.89p)	16.11p
(I) - Final (F) - Interim (B) - Nine months				

THE INVESTMENT COLUMN

Edited by Magnus Grimond

Homeworks pays off for MFI as sales creep up

On the face of it, yesterday's trading update from MFI signalled that at least one of the pressures affecting the furniture retailer was easing. Continuing sluggish retail demand in the UK has kept the lid on sales growth in 1995; an increase of 1.3 per cent reported at the half-way stage was not maintained into the third quarter.

The group says that sales were up 2 per cent between mid-November and the end of February, which includes the key post-Christmas selling period. With trading "poor" in the run-up to the festive season, that implies growth of nearer 4 to 5 per cent in the new year period. The news was welcomed by the stock market yesterday, which marked MFI's shares up higher to 138p.

But that may be premature jubilation. Depressed sales have been only part of the group's problem. Margins have been under pressure for some time from rising raw material prices. Hopes in December that reductions evident then would ease the situation now look overdone.

MFI indicated yesterday that although gross margins have recovered some of the ground lost in the first half, they will still be down on the year. It appears that lower costs are taking longer to feed through the buying chain than expected and the benefits will not be felt until next year.

MFI: at a glance

	1992	1993	1994	1995*
Net sales (£m)	7.8	15.5	18.8	18.1
Net profit (£m)	1.3	2.0	2.1	1.8
Net profit margin (%)	17.5	13.0	11.3	10.0
EPS (pence)	3.75	4.00	4.22	4.5

Share price

pence

Source: Bloomberg

ed for their loyalty. Since then, the shares have outperformed the rest of the stock market by over 450 per cent and put Cowie's own performance in the shade.

Yesterday, the shares added 16p to 589p as the motor distributor and bus builder unveiled another cracking set of results. Pre-tax profits climbed 57 per cent to a new record of £25.3m in the 12 months to December.

The figures were boosted by some sure-footed acquisitions. The £31m half-share in Prevost Car, a Canadian bus maker bought by Henlys with Volvo, chipped in £4.5m to operating profits in just seven months.

Northern Counties, acquired at the same time, added £1.3m for an outlay of £12m.

But, more importantly, the latest results have borne out management's determination to build its position in the bus and coach market, despite what has turned out to be one of the worst recessions ever to hit the industry.

Stripping out acquisitions, underlying profits from buses and coaches roared ahead 69 per cent to £14.4m.

After seven lean years, Henlys has cashed in on fast year's recovery, which saw coach sales leap 45 per cent and bus demand rise 23 per cent. But management deserves much of the credit: for foreseeing the eventual end of the drought in orders caused by deregulation and recession, they have been patiently building market share.

From a standing start in 1991, Henlys has grabbed a market-leading position in buses in just three years. The impeccably timed Northern acquisition, which took the group into double-deckers in a year when registrations doubled, added 10 points to its market share, taking it to 39 per cent.

Henlys now leads the combined UK bus and coach market and with bus fleets typically 13 to 15 years old, the outlook is bright, reflected in a £70m year-end order book.

The outlook for motors is less certain, but Henlys' distribution side did well to maintain underlying profits in another difficult year for the market and a cost-cutting programme should underpin future margins.

Profits of £33m this year would put the shares on a forward multiple of 15. Still reasonable value.

FT
FINANCIAL TIMES
Magazines

ARE YOUR PERSONAL FINANCES ON TARGET?



Personal financial planning means more than just having an array of investments, a tax-free savings account and shares in the odd utility company. If you haven't yet thought of avoiding inheritance tax, made a provision for long-term nursing care or even begun to check interest rates on a regular basis, you could well be missing out some important aspects of sound investment.

In the next issue of Investors Chronicle we examine in detail all the essential elements of financial planning to ensure you are well provided for, both now and in the

future. We'll advise you how to make the most of tax-breaks, help you to identify the investment products with the lowest charges, and show you how to pick the top performers amongst Peps, investment trusts and unit trusts.

So, if you're still to take out your Peps for 1996, are having worries about self-assessment of tax or are simply wanting a few pointers for a more considered investment strategy, don't miss the Investors Chronicle guide to Personal Financial Planning with the latest issue.

On sale Friday 1st March. Price £2.00.

INVESTORS CHRONICLE
THE CITY INSIDE OUT

sport

Still football crazy after all these years

Peter Beardsley has been seen and done most things, but he still can't wait for Monday's game with Manchester United. He told Glenn Moore why

He stayed behind for extra training, he collected up the cones and markers, and with Les Ferdinand, he was still signing autographs long after most of his team-mates were showered and changed. Newcastle may be on the brink of one of their most important matches in their recent history, but, for Peter Beardsley yesterday, it was business as usual.

When Alex Ferguson suggested Newcastle will crack under the pressure of the title run-in, it was not Peter Beardsley he had in mind. Alone among the Newcastle team to face Manchester United at St James' Park on Monday night, he already has an English championship medal in his locker – two of them. He also carries the bitter memory of twice finishing second. He has been there, done that, and always with a certain style.

Thus, while the club has adopted an out-of-character siege mentality this week, Beardsley remains unaffected. An interview request was readily agreed to, with the proviso, made almost with embarrassment, that Kevin Keegan would have to grant permission first.

Keegan trusts his captain and, having finally left the pitch at Durham University's Maiden Castle complex yesterday, Beardsley was able to explain how Monday's match excels, rather than intimidates. "I can't wait," he said. "If you cannot look forward to this there is no point in being in the game. If someone told me at the beginning of the season 'You will be four points clear at the beginning of March, playing the second-placed team to go seven clear', I would have been delighted.

"It becomes more enjoyable as you go on. At my age (35) everything is a bonus and I am in a position everybody would like to be in – captain of your home-town club, going for something like this."

A draw would be acceptable to Newcastle, but Beardsley is well aware of the danger of settling for a stalemate in advance.

"The two years I won the title with Liverpool, we did so quite comfortably. The one time when Arsenal won with the last kick of the season, we did not need to win the game, they did. They took a few risks and got away with it. In many



Peter Beardsley at Newcastle United's training ground yesterday: 'It becomes more enjoyable as you go on'

ways it is better chasing than being in the lead. We can afford a draw but we are not a team to go looking for one. Especially at home, we have won 13 out of 13 and we are looking for 19 out of 19."

Beardsley has a particular incentive to do well. He came late to stardom – rejected by Gillingham and Cambridge, he had a spell of unemployment and then worked in an engineering factory. Carlisle discovered him at 18 and he also played for Vancouver Whitecaps before, in 1982, he appeared to have broken into the big time, Manchester United, impressed by Beardsley's display against them in a tour match (including a goal in 13 seconds – after United had kicked off) signed him.

However, in a frustrating season

he played just one game, a League Cup tie against Bournemouth, before Ron Atkinson allowed him to return to Canada. It was another two seasons before, at the age of 23, he was to play in the top flight with Newcastle. Beardsley maintains he gets on well with Atkinson, but believes he was never given a chance.

"It is always special to play against Manchester United but not in the way it is with Liverpool and Everton, where I played in the first team. A lot of the Manchester United fans probably do not remember I was there. But it is the biggest club in the country, the place is special and the people are – Brian Kidd, Norman Davies [the kit man]. People who were there when I was there."

From Vancouver Beardsley

joined Newcastle, then Liverpool, but he never forgot the early years. "Working in a factory helped me realise how lucky I am. Now the

other. Last week Beardsley was Newcastle's best player in the 3-3 draw with Manchester City. Prompting and providing, his skills stood comparison with David Giola and Faustino Asprilla. He remains in Terry Venables' plans, and, with Nick Barmby suffering a loss of form, may yet be a key player in England's Euro 96 challenge.

"I am hopeful rather than confident, I want to be there but I am not convinced I will be – he [Terry Venables] has so much choice. It will be a mini-World Cup."

"I am trying to stay a part of it as long as possible. Because the game has got quicker, the older players, who use their heads, can stay in the game longer. The likes of Gordon Strachan and Ray Wilkins,

money is coming in I am able to look after my family better than I was able to be looked after. I appreciate what I have got."

He is in no hurry to let it go.

Photograph: Simon Wilkinson

ball do the work." The latter pair make much of their devotion to diet – but Beardsley is fuelled by natural fitness and enthusiasm.

"I have never drunk alcohol [he does not like the taste] but I eat what I want. When we go away on a Friday night, I always have chicken soup and roast chicken, other than that I eat what the kids at home eat. I think it is because I train the way I do. When I pack it in I may have to be careful, I eat a fair bit of chocolate. I have been lucky with injuries – I have not had a serious operation."

"The enthusiasm is the easiest part of the game. It is easy for anybody to run about and chase people. The kids in the dressing-room

keep you young – you have to be on your toes otherwise they take it

City trial for second Georgian FA's push Hoddle's move for Hoddle's move for Wright rejected

Phil Shaw looks forward to an eventful programme of matches over the weekend

Apart from City, Coventry arguably have most to lose. They have enjoyed 29 years' uninterrupted membership of the top division and allowed Ron Atkinson to spend unprecedented sums to maintain it.

Wimbledon, sandwiched between the Saints and Sky Blues, receive Chelsea a week before their FA Cup quarter-final collision. Those who would not lament the Dons' demotion should know they have scored as many goals as fourth-placed Aston Villa.

Villa's appearance on the fringe of the title race is an example to all the stragglers. After avoiding relegation on the final day last season, they go to Liverpool tomorrow with one Wembley place secure, another possible and a good chance of qualifying for Europe via the Premiership. Liverpool, 2-0 victors at Villa Park a month ago, must win to keep the pressure on the top two.

It is an important weekend in the First Division too, with the leaders Derby putting a long unbeaten run against fourth-placed Huddersfield, who boast just one post-war win at the Baseball Ground. Derby may look assured of promotion, but Sunderland and Charlton have games in hand.

Stoke, in fifth place despite restrictions on Lou Macari's spending power, will also be strong candidates for one of the two automatic berths if they see off the sixth club, Barnsley.

Fifa will also discuss measures to increase the proportion of playing time.

The Football Association is spearheading a move to allow referees who play the advantage rule to change their mind if the advantage does not materialise.

The game's international rule-making body, the International Football Association Board, is to vote on the idea at its annual meeting in Rio de Janeiro on March 9.

The FA wants to give referees the chance to go back and award a free-kick if the team benefiting from the advantage rule subsequently lose possession. They believe it would allow more flexibility – and it could be implemented next season.

An official of the game's international governing body, Fifa, said the main problem would be to decide how long referees could wait before deciding whether the team had gained an advantage.

The board will also vote on a move to allow three substitutions and a total of seven players on the bench during all official competition matches. Other proposals formally recognising that it is the linesman's role to signal offside and off-the-ball incidents. Any proposals passed will be introduced on July 1.

Fifa will also discuss measures to increase the proportion of playing time.

Glen Hoddle's phone call to Arsenal asking for Ian Wright's home number met with a unequivocal rebuff from Bruce Rioch.

"I told him that Ian is not on the transfer list and is not for sale," the Arsenal manager said.

Hoddle's interest in taking the Gunners striker and Highbury deal to Chelsea for £2.5m had been aroused by press speculation that Wright's first-team place might not be secure, with Rioch having reportedly been to France to run his eye over Patrice Loko, the Paris St-Germain forward. A scouting outing that Rioch yesterday denied had taken place.

Wright has escaped with a censure by the Football Association over his "little Hitler" comment about referees. Rioch was "delighted" at the outcome but added the rider that "it's down to Ian as far as discipline is concerned. I think we have seen Cantona address the problem very well to date".

Kevin Keegan, who has been keeping a low profile in advance of Monday's meeting with Manchester United, yesterday broke cover to defend Faustino Asprilla and attack television's role in disciplinary matters.

The Newcastle manager,

speaking for the first time since his £7.5m signing was charged with two counts of misconduct following the game against Manchester City, said that trial by television was "a very dangerous road" to go down.

"If it's happening to every other team then that's fine," he said. "But it's not fine if one or two teams are going to be involved, especially as the chances are that it is the top teams which are going to be shown more on television."

As for Asprilla, Keegan will be standing by his man. "After all I'm the guy who went out there and signed him," he said.

Regi Blinker, the Dutch international winger, has agreed a three-and-a-half year contract with Sheffield Wednesday. Blinker, 26, is rated at around £1m by Wednesday, who are now ironing out the financial details with Feyenoord.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in the team, but his replacement, David Lister, has been loaned out to Birmingham.

Midfielder Steve McManaman, Middlesbrough's British import, could make his debut against Feyenoord on Saturday. McManaman, 24, has recovered from a knee operation and is back in

sport

FIVE NATIONS' CHAMPIONSHIP

Where the Murrayfield battle will be won and lost

LINE-OUT

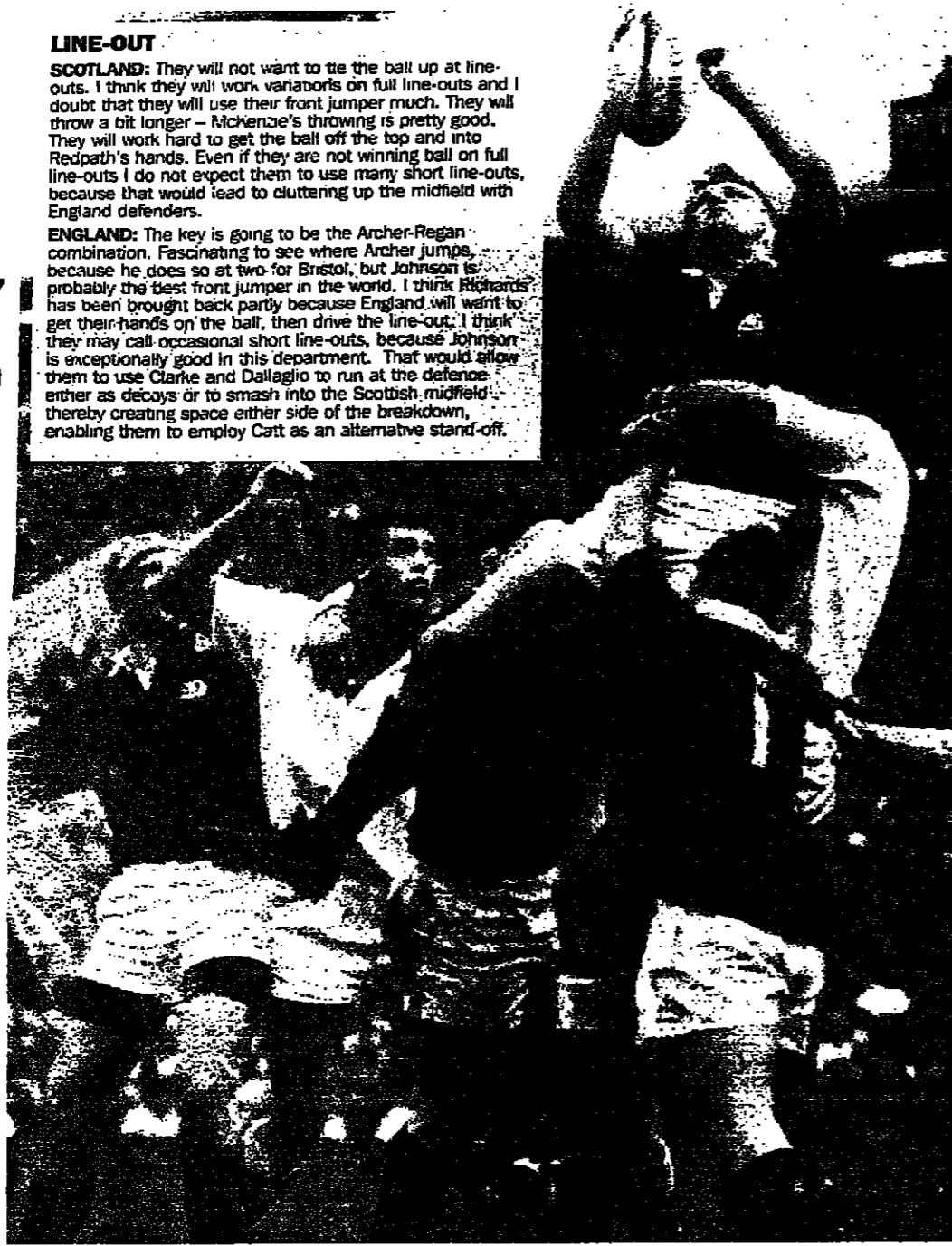
SCOTLAND: They will not want to tie the ball up at line-outs. I think they will work variations on full line-outs and I doubt that they will use their front jumper much. They will throw a bit longer — McKenzie's throwing is pretty good. They will work hard to get the ball off the top and into Redpath's hands. Even if they are not winning ball on full line-outs I do not expect them to use many short line-outs, because that would lead to cluttering up the midfield with England defenders.

ENGLAND: The key is going to be the Archer-Regan combination. Fascinating to see where Archer jumps — because he does so at two-for-Bristol, but Johnson is probably the best front jumper in the world. I think Richards has been brought back partly because England will want to get their hands on the ball, then drive the line-out. I think they may call occasional short line-outs, because Johnson is exceptionally good in this department. That would allow them to use Clarke and Dallaglio to run at the defence, either as decoys or to smash into the Scottish midfield, thereby creating space either side of the breakdown, enabling them to employ Catt as an alternative stand-off.

Brian Ashton,
the Bath
coach,
assesses which
team has the
advantage in
each of the
crucial tactical
areas of
today's game,
and predicts
who will
emerge
as winners

Interview by
David Llewellyn

Bath won the Pilkington Cup last year in Brian Ashton's first season in charge. He took over following four successful years as assistant to Jack Rowland, coaching the backs. He was assistant coach on England's 1985 tour to New Zealand, and also coached teams in Italy from 1976 to 1979



RUCK AND MAUL

SCOTLAND: They will try to start an up-tempo game with some rapid running and rucking, trying to probe for gaps in the area between 15 and 20 metres from the first phase. Defensively, this is going to be a key area for Grayson and Carling to slow ball down, but quick Scottish ruck ball will allow Redpath and Townsend to dictate play. The Scots can quickly build momentum carrying the ball towards ruck bursts. The Scots will run as much as they can, where they feel more comfortable, and if more effective, even their backs are very good ruckers.

ENGLAND: Getting the ball away and into touch is probably playing more to Scotland's strengths so they will want to get their hands on the ball as quickly as possible. The key will be to get the ball to the front row of the ruck. Richards is probably the best rucker. However, the ball will be lost but will possibly be something I don't think Scotland can do, as this will enable them to keep changing the position and area of the ruck, stay closer to the ball.

HALF-BACKS

SCOTLAND: They will be looking to make the most of the first phase. They will want to get the ball to the front row of the ruck and then run as quickly as possible to the breakdown. They will then want to get the ball to the back row and run towards the touchline, as this is a very good area for running. The back row will then run towards the breakdown across the field, as this is a good area for running. The ball will then be passed to the back row, who will then run towards the touchline, as this is a good area for running.

ENGLAND: The ball will be in the hands of the half-backs. Redpath, 12-18 metres from the ball, will be in the position to pass many balls, but given a free run, he is looking whether to pass. It will be interesting to see how much freedom the ball will have in the hands of the half-backs. His service is probably not there, but he is a good ball carrier and has had a good season. He has made his mark on the ruck and breakdown. My impression is that he is still learning the running game. Unfortunately he is learning it in Division Two. He will need help from someone outside him, someone who has tasted failure once before at Murrayfield. Grayson must not be left in limbo, wondering what exactly he can do to help to play.

SCRUM

SCOTLAND: This is not regarded as a strength. They looked a wee bit creaky in the Wales game and I do not think they will be searching for a game involving a great deal of scrummaging. From a tactical point of view what they will be aiming to do on their own put-in is to get the ball as quickly as possible back to the No 8 and then away and out the half-backs.

ENGLAND: This is a new scrummaging unit, but if it comes together then I think they will be happy to drive as many scrums as they feel comfortable with and I think some back-row moves will involve Richards holding the ball up to allow the forwards to regroup around him and then they will try to drive it and spin it off down the field. The set-piece performance of the front five is going to be crucial.



BACK ROW

SCOTLAND: They have been very good at winning traditional open-side mauls, but I think the back row, particularly Townsend, will be asked to do more in the first phase. Smith, of course, is a specialist in the second phase. He will be asked to hold the ball and drive the ball forward, as he did in the Wales game. He will be asked to hold the ball and drive the ball forward, as he did in the Wales game. He will be asked to hold the ball and drive the ball forward, as he did in the Wales game. He will be asked to hold the ball and drive the ball forward, as he did in the Wales game.

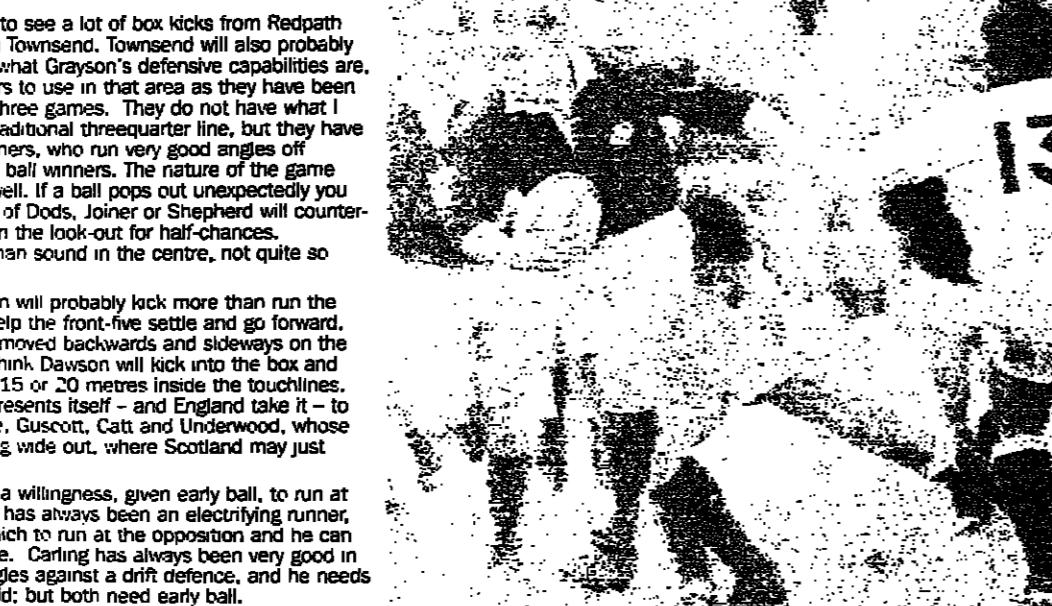
ENGLAND: This has changed for the fifth time in nearly three years and is the fourth different combination. I see Catt as being a two-plus one combination, i.e. two ball-winning mauls — Dallaglio and Richards, or Clarke and Richards, and then Clarke or Dallaglio running on Townsend and Grayson to hit the Scottish half-backs. And by attacking close in this area it allows them front-row to get in more easily in the next phase. Clarke, at No 6, has the opportunity not to get involved in the first breakdown, and I think if he were to play off the shoulder of Catt, as broken play it could be startingly dynamic and effective.

RUNNING/KICKING

SCOTLAND: We can expect to see a lot of box kicks from Redpath and some teasing ones from Townsend. Townsend will also probably have a fairly shrewd idea of what Grayson's defensive capabilities are, so he will know which runners to use in that area as they have been successful here in the past three games. They do not have what I would call the fluency of a traditional three-quarter line, but they have very strong and abrasive runners, who run very good angles off Townsend and also are good ball winners. The nature of the game they play is that they react well. If a ball pops out unexpectedly you can guarantee that the likes of Dods, Joiner or Shepherd will counter-attack. They are all always on the look-out for half-chances. Defensively, they are more than sound in the centre, not quite so assured wider out.

ENGLAND: I suspect Grayson will probably kick more than the ball, certainly earlier on to help the front-five settle and go forward, since it is vital that they get moved backwards and sideways on the pitch as little as possible. I think Dawson will kick into the box and Grayson into the area some 15 or 20 metres inside the touchlines. But I hope the opportunity presents itself — and England take it — to use the likes of Sleightholme, Guscott, Catt and Underwood, whose combined pace is devastating wide out, where Scotland may just prove to be vulnerable.

Carling and Guscott showed a willingness, given early ball, to run at the Welsh maul. Guscott has always been an electrifying runner, just give him five yards in which to run at the opposition and he can very easily unsettle a defence. Carling has always been very good in the past at running good angles against a drift defence, and he needs to do this again at Murrayfield; but both need early ball.



SCOTLAND: Scotland have a club side mentality because of the way their season has been organised, spending every weekend together between internationals. They have also played the same way in all three previous championship matches and they know precisely what their roles are. Generally, because of their preference for a rucking game, they will attack some 15 metres wide of first phase. The point at issue is, can they sustain their style of play when there is a Triple Crown and a Grand-Slam at stake — at Murrayfield? A great deal will be done to Redpath and Townsend to play as quickly as possible, to require a massive collective and courageous effort — physically and mentally — to play as a team, when it is not doing; and if one player freezes then the whole thing could start to fall apart. Overall their game plan will be more flexible, they will use space as it occurs in front of them and just go. In dramatic terms, they will be improvisers.

ENGLAND: They will want to get Archer and Richards into the game as quickly as possible and expect early on they will be looking for scrums and line-outs to get those departments working; this will help to set out the Scottish front five. They will want to attack between five and 10 metres wide of first phase and use their big mauls off the half-backs, making them do as much tackling as possible. So they will employ driving mauls and defensive back-row moves and try to stop Scotland's back row ranging about the field. England need to get the balance right between kicking and ball in hand, for kicking often relinquishes control and in rugby league they can't do that, which controls the ball, controls the game. Given the importance of the occasion I suspect England will play much tighter and closer. Overall, the England game plan will be more rigid. They will try to create space first and then use it. In dramatic terms, perhaps, this is method acting.

VERDICT:

It will be a close game. I cannot see either side running away with it. But if both sides play to their strengths, England will win.

Smith helps endangered species

Having played for Scotland off and on since 1992, Ian Smith — who is as intrinsically Glasgow as you could get — has since grown impatient with persistent questioning about his lineage. But build up to a Scottish Grand Slam finale against England and he is asked about little else.

Begging his pardon even so, but there is an unavoidable dichotomy between the Smith who sits comfortably in the familiar surroundings of Kingholm talking about his life in (mainly Gloucester) rugby and the Caledonian *other* who has done Five Nations rugby a service by blazing a trail on behalf of an endangered rugby species called the open-side flanker.

At nearly 52, Smith has been around long enough — more than 350 Gloucester games since making his debut as an 18-year-old — and dealt with enough aggravating inquisitors to know

that curiosity about his provenance will continue as long as his Scotland career. "I get so irritated that people keep dragging it up," he complained. Sorry, Ian, but there is no escape.

"I know it's a fact of my past but it does get annoying when people harp on about it when they could be concentrating on the rugby or the game. There is nothing I can say that will make people think I'm a Scot.

All I can do is go out and play, and if you think I play like an Englishman playing for Scotland, then go be it. The fact is I feel like a Scot and always have since I was a young boy."

But the fact is, too, that under present eligibility rules Smith would have committed himself to England — at least until a decent interval had passed — when he represented England B against Spain in 1989, and it is not widely remembered that in 1990 he was

Gloucester's veteran open-side flanker followed his feelings to play for Scotland. Steve Bale reports on England's loss

even in England's preliminary squad for the '91 World Cup.

But it was in 1990, on the very day that he dashed away from a Gloucester game at Nottingham for one of those England sessions, that the change of allegiance began to occur.

Gloucester's defeat that day cost them the championship, but the consolation for Smith was a conversation he had before his departure with Chris Gray, the Nottingham captain.

Gray, an exile from the Lothians who had played in the Scotland second row against England when the Grand Slam had been won six weeks earlier, knew of Smith's Scottish connection and, as any good Scot would, tapped him up. A later phone call from Ian McGeechan, the persuasive Scotland coach, made up

Smith's mind up for him; he made his Test debut in 1992 and will win his 10th cap for the land of his paternal grandparents against England this afternoon.

Smith's father Dick, an outstanding Gloucester flanker who appeared in the very first knock-out final at Twickenham in 1972, was Gloucester-born to a couple from Aberdeen which Smith Jr insists gave him a Scottish allegiance from his earliest years. "I had always supported Scotland as a young boy and I always felt I wanted to switch," he said.

It was England's loss. Ask any back-row forward on the Courage league circuit, and he will pay a sincere tribute to Smith's quality, bearing in mind also that he has sustained this individual excellence during a

period — ever since that defeat at Nottingham was followed a week later by a cup-final annihilation by Bath — when Gloucester collectively have fallen far short of their traditional eminence.

Which perhaps helps explain why he has flourished in a different, less introspective and claustrophobic environment. In the Scottish chain of command Rob Wainwright, the captain, has this season had the good sense to use Smith with his wisdom gained from long experience, as his first lieutenant.

And within the thrilling strategy of all-out movement with which Scotland have beaten Ireland, France and Wales, Smith as open-side flanker has more than any individual been responsible for its successful implementation. To think that not

so long ago fleet-footed forwards of Smith's ilk were on the verge of extinction in the international game.

Not that Smith ever accepted its inevitability. "I've always said it: what goes round comes round. When you look at the successful teams, especially New Zealand and Australia, they have always picked a specialist open-side and basically revolve the game around him. So it's been frustrating to see a game evolving here that involved big men playing an upright game, hitting up the middle."

But I was always confident that it was a cyclical thing. Moves we used to use 10 years ago and which then petered out for a while have come back into use again and it's clear that the trend is back in the direction of players like me. But for the open-side to be successful depends on the way other units work as well. A back row is only as good as

the front five in front of it and the back line behind it."

With Gwyn Jones and Ireland, by reinstating Denis McBride, are treading much the same path and even in the home of back-row mastodons, England, they have come to acknowledge the requirement for a specialist, such as Smith, even if by choosing Lawrence Dallaglio they designedly have a player who must learn as he goes along.

None, one would suggest, has done it as well as Smith during this exhilarating Scottish season. "It is quite simply, the natural way for me to play, what I've always done from when I was a young lad years ago," he said. "If I perform as I should, then the side functions as it should, and that's what it will be against England. That's a responsibility, I know, but I feel comfortable with it."

"I play against these blokes in English club rugby, week-in



Smith: Fleet-footed
week-out, so I know what they are like, what they can do, their strengths and weaknesses. I'm as confident as you can be going into a game like this and that's a deliberately ambiguous statement. If we — or should I say if we are allowed to — play as well as we can, then it could be a great day." A great day for Aberdeen, I doubt, but would it be a great day for Gloucester?

مكتاب من الأجل

There is no middle way for a captain: you either smell as sweet as a Ruud Gullit pass or as foul as a Vinny Jones tackle

As Michael Atherton completes a week in which England's cricketing decline has reached such depths that the entire squad should be fitted with an aqua-tinge, he can take comfort from one thing: he's not Richie Richardson. After Thursday's defeat against Kenya, Richardson has achieved the unlikely feat of making Graham Taylor look like a wanted man.

"People in the Caribbean have become immune to disappointment, but this must go down as the worst-ever performance," Michael Holding said after the West Indies showed all the spinal consistency of a caterpillar as they crumbled to the East African part-timers. "I don't know if Richie will go now, but something will have to be done."

Apart from Holding's idiosyncratic analysis of the length of West

Indian disappointment (being the best team in the world for 20 years must get you after a while), what was interesting about his comments was the suggestion that dropping the pilot is what is required to put the ship back on course.

Indeed as Maurice Odumbe, Kenya's skipper, after apparently single-handedly driving his team to victory, savours the prospect of smidhoo back home ("they should declare a national holiday in Kenya," he said after his match-winning efforts, "not today, but on my birthday"), this week has provided conclusive evidence that there is no middle way for a captain: you either smell as sweet as a Ruud Gullit pass, or as foul as a Vinny Jones tackle.

Memory, inevitably, plays no part in this. The World Cup has

progressed with a growing soundtrack of trumpeting headlines suggesting that Atherton - terse, hang-dog, cool - should be replaced by Dermot Reeve - chipper, spontaneous, passionate - so that even if England lost, they would have the good grace to do so in a sweaty shirt. This campaign has generally been orchestrated by the same voices which recently demanded Atherton's deification after his match-saving efforts against South Africa. Meanwhile Will Carling, a man reckoned to be so sharp on the principles of leadership that he has made a handy living selling his ideas to big business, is judged by many shrewd observers to be past his inspire-by-date. Dean Richards's return, for instance, has been widely heralded as the only chance England have of winning today; at last

Jim White



ON SATURDAY

the team will have someone to inspire them.

In a sense Carling and Atherton, their manner cerebral rather than gungho, are of a kind. According to Brian Moore, Carling's almost

preternatural calm in his team-talks was as liable to enraged as it was to quell nerves. During one international, Moore recalls, with England trailing and only a few minutes left, Carling gathered the team together as the opposition took yet another penalty and told them not to panic: there was plenty of time left. One of the forwards, prone to adopting the "Corporal Jones" approach to crisis, sought to disagree with his skipper: "We're effing losing 14 effing 8 and this effler tells us not to effing panic."

"We're effing losing 14 effing 8 and this effler tells us not to effing panic."

The problem is, that crisis was temporary. It seems from their two teams' recent performances that the Carling/Atherton way of captaincy has little effect if the decline is more

significant (pull your sleeves up and dig for victory appear not to be words in their vocabulary). Particularly if, as they have, you have imposed above you a layer of management which is clearly not up to the job. Even Dermot Reeve's particular brand of up-and-at-'em leadership skills would be tested in a dressing-room where morale has been damaged irreparably by Ray Illingworth's treatment of Devon Malcolm and Mark Ramprakash, interjections straight from the Cedric Brown school of man-management. Nevertheless, Carling appeared to thrive under the direction of Jack Rowell, whose idea of team selection is to drop the best performer.

To suggest either manager is entirely responsible for their country's dip in form is to over-simplify; but we

all know that organisations stink from the head down. There is not much someone half-way down the operation (where Carling and Atherton now find themselves) can do to lift those intangible things - morale and goodwill - that keep a creative enterprise afloat if their leaders show such disloyalty to their colleagues. If Atherton and Carling were free to make decisions that matter, instead of being saddled with cash-handed management, their present predicament would be less threatening.

In the meantime, they can but reflect on the celebratory plaudits that can come a leader's way if he gets it right. How does that version of "Wonderwall" sung by Manchester City fans go again? "And Friday, you could have had Richard Madley. But after all, you got Alan Ball."

Wales prepared to take advantage of their hosts

Paddy Power, a prominent Dublin bookmaker and not an expression of Irish fortitude, has cleaned up in a big way this season. Of course, he cleans up every year but this time it's a scalping and he is booking his holidays in Bermuda rather than Blackpool. It seems like many moons ago that, when Ireland began their Five Nations campaign Mr Power was almost engulfed by a green tide of optimism.

There is no limit to what Ireland could achieve. Triple Crown, Grand Slam, you name it and the money was on. Victories over Fiji and the United States were the red herrings and the line was also baited with the arrival of new management and a new, New Zealand coaching team. Everybody is still waiting with bated breath.

For today's encounter, which carries the inglorious sub-plot of pass the wooden spoon, the green party has run out of revellers. Ireland are 11-10, Wales 8-11. Favourites to score the first try? The Wales wings Jean Evans and Wayne Proctor. Penalty (sic) tries, according to the Power chain of shops, do not count as far as having a point is concerned.

For some reason in Ireland,

Tim Glover reports from Dublin on the meeting of this year's under-achievers

everybody precedes a sentence with the word "now", as in "Now, what are we having?" or "Now, that'll be £2.80 for a pint of Guinness... now, that'll be down to inflation."

Now, now is the time for Wales, having stripped the valleys of daffodils yesterday to celebrate St David's Day, to gain a tangible reward for a couple of heartening performances that nevertheless resulted in defeat. They scored two tries against England at Twickenham and could have beaten Scotland in Cardiff. Ireland never looked like beating Scotland in Dublin and need hardly have bothered to take the field against France in Paris, where they conceded seven tries and were rewarded with a penalty try.

Ireland are in a right old pickle and the selectors have made so many changes in such a brief space of time they have almost run out of options. They did not choose wisely for the first match, nor for the second and are now in a position in rugby terms, of declining to Third World level. Jim Staples, the captain who went off with

concussion against France, is replaced by the 22-year-old Orrell full-back Simon Mason (grandparents from Dublin) and the captaincy has been handed to the scrum-half Niall Hogan. Post-Paris, Ireland have made six changes to personnel and another three positional. Yet the player who had the nightmare at Parc des Princes was Hogan. "We discussed Hogan's position at length," Pat Whelan, the manager, said. "Nobody knows more than Niall Hogan that he had a poor game in Paris in terms of his passing, etc."

Hogan, a doctor, has passed his exams and it is the best pass he has made this season. He looked as if he needed an umbilical cord to find his partner David Humphreys in Paris, which was all the more surprising given his form in the World Cup in South Africa last summer. Hogan had an excellent game against Wales in Johanessburg, helping Ireland to reach the quarter-final. Both countries are barely recognisable from that little domestic squabble at Ellis Park. Wales, who

were quite diabolical that evening, have also changed their coach and the difference is that the selection of Kevin Bowring has resulted in a change of heart as well as personnel.

Bowring, Wales' sixth coach since 1988 and the first full-time appointment, seems to have pulled off the trick of reawakening Wales to its inheritance. The audacious choice of Arwel Thomas at stand-off has changed the complexion of the team from grey to a full-blooded red. It has not paid off yet, but not for the want of trying and while Ireland are desperately searching for the right blend Wales, for only the fifth time in their history, have had an unchanged team for three games in a row.

"We have been encouraged by the way the team has played," Bowring said. "We are building a new side and despite the losses we are making progress in the type of game we want to play. What we are really trying to do is to get the team playing in the traditional Welsh manner which is the fast, fluid and open game I think we play best."

Murray Kidd, the Ireland coach, seemed to be reading Bowring's mind: "Wales look like a team on the up. Their line-out is as good as any in the game. They are winning a lot of possession. They look sharper than they have for years."

About the only sensible move Ireland made against France was in selecting Humphreys. As it happened, he and Hogan barely made contact and last weekend Ireland would not allow Humphreys to play for his club, insisting instead that the half-backs worked on a rapport in Dublin. Their partnership had got to be better than it was in France but Ireland seem to have lost not only the script but the prompter. They strung together one marvellous move against Scotland and the hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

Ireland A, who will be going for the Triple Crown when they meet England A at Richmond in a fortnight, went ahead after 14 minutes with a try from Barry McManus. The hero and try-scorer was Peter Clohessy, and look what happened to him.

